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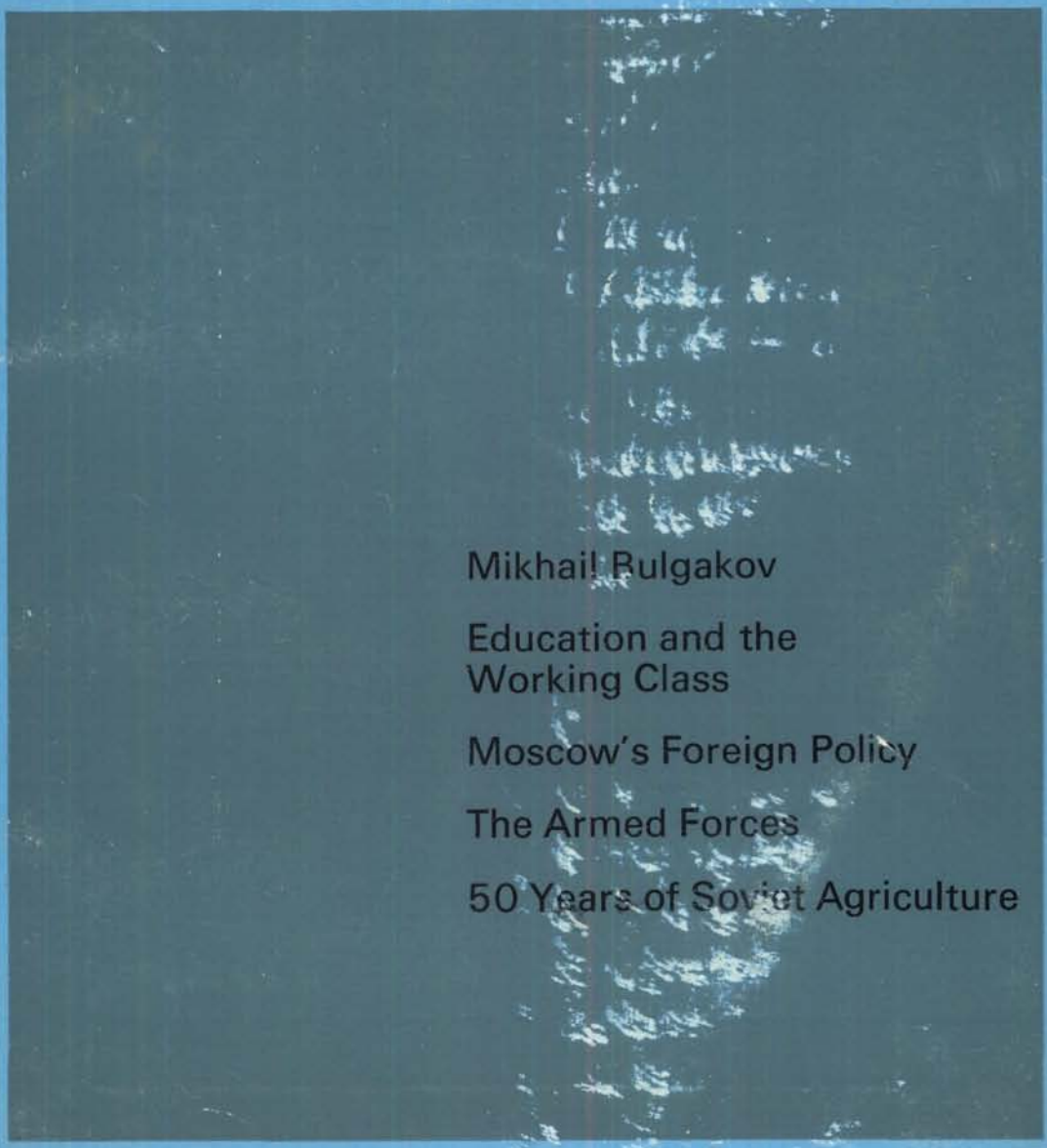

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SURVEY

A Journal of Soviet and East European Studies

No. 65 **October 1967**

Editors: Walter Laqueur, Leo Labedz

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Editorial and Subscription office, Ilford House, 133 Oxford Street, London, W.1

Subscription rates: £2 or $6 a year. Single copies 10s. or $1.50.

American Distributors: Franklin Square Subscription Agency, 545 Cedar Lane, Teaneck, New Jersey, U.S.A., with whom subscriptions may be entered.

Survey is published by Information Bulletin, Ltd., 133 Oxford Street, London. W.1, on behalf of the Congress for Cultural Freedom.

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MIKHAIL BULGAKOV

M. V. Glenny

IF a Soviet '*intelligent*' were asked to name the two most important events in Russian literature of the last couple of years, he would be almost sure to mention the publication of *A Theatrical Novel* and *The Master and Margarita*. Both are shortly due for publication in English, both are by Mikhail Bulgakov, a writer who has been dead for 27 years and whose reputation until now has largely rested on a single work—a play about the Civil War, *The Days of the Turbins*, adapted from his own novel *The White Guard*. Yet by any standards Bulgakov was a prolific dramatist. N. A. Gorchakov, a historian of the Soviet theatre, puts his total output of plays at thirty-six. Without more evidence to support it, this figure seems rather high. However, discounting juvenilia, Bulgakov's known plays certainly amount to thirteen; eight have been published and eight (not the same ones) performed, although of these only four reached the stage in Bulgakov's lifetime. Add to these his three opera libretti, a translation of *L'Avare*, and an unknown quantity of works in MS, and the result is a considerable achievement in the field of dramatic literature for an author who died at the age of 48 and who saw most of his plays banned by the censor before they even had a public showing. No less an authority than Nemirovich-Danchenko assessed Bulgakov as 'probably the most brilliant of all exponents of dramatic technique. His talent—for sustaining a plot, for keeping an audience in suspense for the length of a play, for creating living images, and for conveying ideas in dramatic terms—is absolutely unique and I believe that the attacks on him are the result of a misunderstanding.'

The irony of this staggering understatement must have appealed to Bulgakov, who had felt the full force of party-backed opposition, first from RAPP and then from Glavrepertkom. (Perhaps it was Bulgakov, in one of his bursts of savage humour which he could turn on friend and foe alike, who coined the nickname 'Nevzirovich-Vranchenko'.) With the exception of his politically harmless stage adaptation of *Dead Souls* and a brief, disastrous run of his play *Molière* in 1936, not one of the plays that Bulgakov wrote in the thirties was staged in his lifetime, although three-quarters of his dramatic works were written in that decade. But by employing him as an assistant producer and literary adviser (and even as an actor; Bulgakov made quite a hit as the judge in the immortal breach-of-promise case of Bardell *v.* Pickwick in a stage version of *The Pickwick Papers*), the Moscow Art Theatre was at least able to pay Bulgakov a living wage and shield him from the worst forms of maltreatment perpetrated by Stalin on so many other non-conforming writers. After his breach with Stanislavsky in 1936, for the remaining four years of his life Bulgakov enjoyed similar

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protection as librettist to the Bolshoi Theatre, although none of his libretti ever reached the stage.

After his death Bulgakov was not quite an 'unperson', as he was never formally denounced, but his name and reputation were obscured by a heavy coating of official disapproval. Since the late fifties the slow work of his posthumous literary rehabilitation has been under way. A commission was set up to act as his literary executors and a number of Soviet scholars, editors, and critics have been at work on the extensive Bulgakov material. V. Y. Lakshin of *Novy Mir*, and E. E. Popovkin, editor of *Moskva*, have led the field in publishing his out-of-print or unpublished prose works; Paustovsky has championed Bulgakov, once his schoolmate in Kiev; Konstantin Simonov has explicitly ranked Bulgakov's mature work with the prose writings of Pushkin and Lermontov; and Rudnitsky, Polyakova, Lurye, Serman, and Smirnova have in the past five years devoted admirable scholarly and critical attention to Bulgakov's writing for the stage, whilst the Bulgakov archives have been opened to at least one western scholar.

Although in his lifetime Bulgakov's reputation was based almost entirely on his plays—his early novel *The White Guard* and his novellas and short stories of the twenties went out of print soon after publication, while his biography of Molière was not published until 1962—the re-issue of his plays in the early sixties did not create quite the stir that might have been expected. Of the two editions of his plays which appeared in 1962 and 1965, only 10,000 copies of each were printed, a small printing by Soviet standards (compare a standard reissue of Gorky's plays of 180,000 copies). There have been stage revivals of some of the plays; several had good runs in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary, and a handful are in the Soviet repertory, but, perhaps due in part to uninspired production, their success in the USSR of the sixties has so far been less than overwhelming. It is to be hoped that this will be made good before too long.

THE real revelation, however, has been the emergence of Bulgakov as a major novelist, with the publication in 1965 and 1966–67 respectively of *A Theatrical Novel* (to be known in the English version as *Black Snow*), and *The Master and Margarita*. Although it was as a novelist that Bulgakov made his debut in 1925 with *The White Guard*, to the vast majority of two generations of the Soviet reading public this book was no more than a name—one of those famous books that no one has actually read. It first appeared in instalments in the April and May 1925 issues of the literary monthly *Rossiya*, edited by I. G. Lezhnev. By a piece of cruel bad luck for Bulgakov, the last two instalments of his novel failed to appear in this publication, because the June issue of the magazine never came out: like many other privately-financed literary ventures of the NEP period, *Rossiya* folded up and its proprietor left the country. Two small emigré editions were subsequently published in Paris (1925) and in Riga (1928), but with an

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allegedly corrupt text. Russian readers have had to wait for *The White Guard* until 1966, when it was included in a 50,000-copy edition of Bulgakov's *Selected Prose.*

Now that his three novels have been published within a space of eighteen months, Bulgakov can at last be properly assessed as a novelist and independently of his reputation as a writer for the stage. It would be meaningless to say that he was a 'better' novelist than playwright—the two are different but linked functions of one talent; but the novels are inevitably accessible to a wider public than his plays, their intellectual and artistic scope is wider, in keeping with the greater breadth and elasticity of the novel form. In addition to the built-in characteristics of the novel, which Bulgakov exploits to the uttermost limits, one of his strengths as a novelist is a gift 'borrowed', as it were, from his playwriting self: his quite extraordinary power of conveying intensely real, visual effects with an unerring economy of means. The images leap instantly from the page, three-dimensional, true and alive. Such is Bulgakov's command of this rare ability that it is one of the greatest sources of pleasure to be gained from reading his novels. They are compulsively readable, because Bulgakov is one of nature's born storytellers. He does not just string together a narrative sequence, dabbing in the colour and describing states of mind; he is primarily a creator of a teeming fantasy world of people who range from the grotesque to the starkly realistic and, who, as he describes them, begin to move and act in accordance with the often strange but inescapable logic of their natures. Many of those who knew Bulgakov have remarked on his brilliance as raconteur; he was famous among his friends not only as retailer but as creator of a bottomless fund of stories, usually sharply barbed but irresistibly funny. V. Toporkov, a Moscow Art Theatre actor who knew him well, writes of him:

> Bulgakov wrote his stories just as he told them. And as a raconteur he was truly masterly. With his innate sense of humour he used to set such cunning 'traps' to arouse his listeners' impatient curiosity that one could never guess whether his stories were going to end sadly or happily. . . . Indeed his *Theatrical Novel* had its very origin in the old MAT tradition of guying and parodying one's colleagues. . . . His mimicry, his gift of caricature, his cheerful, inoffensive mockery and lively humour were always highly appreciated. . . .

Another and most important element in Bulgakov's artistic make-up was one which he shared with Chekhov—he was a doctor. He graduated brilliantly from the Kiev University medical faculty in 1916 and although he only practised for about four years, he seems to have had the makings of an outstanding physician. He made direct literary use of his experiences as a young GP in the series of stories called *Notes of a Young Physician*, first published as occasional pieces in the magazines *Krasnaya Panorama* and *Meditsinsky Rabotnik* between 1925 and 1927, and now reprinted in the *Selected Prose* volume mentioned above.

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These are enjoyable if rather slight sketches, sober and full of clinical detail, in which Bulgakov kept in check his natural bent for fantasy and elaboration—presumably because his original editors wanted fairly 'straight' pieces. They make very easy reading and convey vividly what it feels like to be flung straight from medical school into a remote country practice where the nearest town is forty horse-drawn miles away. The *Notes* also have a considerable documentary value on clinical practice of the time, and clearly show that although GPs were worked hard, the standard of medical services in 'backward' rural Russia in the year of the revolution was surprisingly high. The young practitioner was in charge of a 14-bed cottage hospital, complete with labour ward and operating theatre, and a staff of two *feldshers*, two midwives, and two nurses. Yet, disappointingly, these stories do not really convey those characteristics bred by his medical career which gave an extra dimension to Bulgakov the writer—that special combination of trained observation, sensitivity to the human condition, and detachment.

To find this, and much more, one must read *The White Guard*. Written in 1924, it was his first novel, but it is the work of a mature writer. In the four years that preceded it Bulgakov had already had enough of the hard grind of literary and journalistic hack-work to last most people for a lifetime. In the desperate conditions of War Communism and the early NEP, to scrape a miserable living, he worked as reporter, rewrite man and feature-writer for virtually any editor who would pay him. At one point when the going was particularly tough he was paid in dried peas! It is a cliché-attitude to regard this sort of apprenticeship to writing as splendid training—good for the soul and good for the style. Bulgakov saw absolutely nothing good in it at all; he loathed his editors and detested Grub-Street journalism as stultifying and degrading. In an autobiographical fragment dated 1926 he wrote:

> At the end of 1921 I reached Moscow, penniless and without possessions, to stay there for ever. For a long time it was agony living in Moscow; to keep myself alive I worked as a newspaper reporter and feature-writer and I came to hate these hack jobs. At the same time I came to hate all editors, I hate them now, and I shall hate them to the end of my days.

By 1923 he was on the permanent staff of that remarkable publication owned by the Railwaymens Union, *Gudok*. It was much more than a trade-union house organ; it had a bold and liberal policy, an amazingly high literary standard, and it was a hothouse of young writing talent. Besides Bulgakov its staff and contributors at the time included Ilf and Petrov, Kataev, Olesha, and Babel. Nor was he quite such an obscure scribbler as he later chose to make out; the Berlin 'Smena Vekh' monthly *Nakanune* had been publishing him for two years and in 1923 accepted a collection of his short stories for publication in book form. (In those dear, dead days of the early twenties it was perfectly normal and legal for Soviet writers to have their works published abroad

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if they could not find a publisher in Russia.) On the back cover of the July 1924 issue of *Rossiya* there is an announcement of forthcoming works to be published which lists Bulgakov's name along with other star contributors, who include Boris Pasternak and Ilya Ehrenburg. It was with the serial publication in *Rossiya* of *The White Guard* that Bulgakov made his real entry into the world of letters, a brilliant start to a career that was to be obscured and distorted by frustration.

The White Guard is a novel of the Civil War; the book's time-span is a few months in the winter of 1918–19. The place is Kiev, the central characters the Turbin family; two brothers and their sister. They live in a house which in location and interior details, lovingly described, is a replica of the house of the Bulgakov family. The Turbins (like the Bulgakovs) are the children of a professor, dead before the story starts. It begins with the funeral of their mother. Socially they belong in the middle-class intelligentsia, politically they are well to the right of centre. Alexei Turbin, eldest brother and head of the family, is a doctor who served in the war as an army medical officer; his sister Elena is married to an unpleasant Baltic German called Talberg who, as soon as real danger threatens, runs away to Germany, thence to Paris with another woman. The youngest of the three is Nikolka, at eighteen just out of school, an officer-cadet and a volunteer in one of the scratch units manned by officers, which formed the White Guard in the Ukraine. Somewhat of a cuckoo in the nest is their hopeless cousin from Zhitomir, Lariosik, a charming bungler who always says the wrong thing, breaks everything he touches, yet is received with warmth and affection. Added to the family group are their three friends, all officers in the White forces—Myshlaevsky, Stepanov (permanently nicknamed Karas—'carp'), and Shervinsky. Round the central core of the sibling family, bound by tight bonds of love and understanding, the seven of them live through that winter of cold, snow, insecurity, confusion, violence, and sudden death.

At the beginning of the novel the Germans are still occupying Kiev, propping up the operetta-like regime of the Hetman Skoropadsky. Their cause already lost for them by the Hetman's ignoble defection, Alexei and Nikolka Turbin and their White Guard officer friends make a brave but futile attempt to resist the capture of Kiev by Petlura and his army of long-moustached, baggy-trousered, trigger-happy Ukrainian rough-necks. Alexei Turbin is wounded and in his weakened state develops typhus; Nikolka barely escapes with his life; Elena learns of her husband's final desertion and in agony over her dying elder brother prays to the Virgin for divine intervention—and Alexei survives. Savage while it lasts, Petlura's occupation is at least short and as his motley troops slink away, Bulgakov coins an image of power which is, artistically speaking, the perfect antithesis to the cosy, womb-like interior of the Turbin's beloved home with which the story began: on the track outside Kiev, hissing gently, waiting to grind into the city, stands the huge steel-clad articulated juggernaut of a Bolshevik armoured train.

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BULGAKOV was no Marxist and he never joined the communist party, but his concept of the revolution was not unlike that of Blok as expressed in *The Twelve:* an elemental force comparable with the Russian blizzard—merciless, irresistible, cleansing. He opens *The White Guard* with a short passage that in Russian is like the tolling of a great bell, poetic in its relentless sonority, and which he repeats at the book's end:

> Great was the year and terrible the year of Our Lord 1918, of the revolution the second. Its summer abundant with warmth and sun, its winter with snow, highest in its heaven stood two stars: the shepherds' star—eventide Venus; and Mars—quivering, red.

To describe a few months in the lives of a few people Bulgakov constructed a rich, finely detailed, multi-faceted, if anything slightly overladen novel. He deployed almost every literary device in a tremendous effort to record the totality of an experience that he had lived through himself: impressionistic description, terse realistic narrative, stream-of-consciousness, lyrical evocation, frequent passages of dialogue in Ukrainian (very confusing, this, for those of us who have no Ukrainian), snatches of verse and song, reflection and flashback, dream sequences, remarks addressed straight at the reader (a special Bulgakov quirk, which he uses in all his novels), and a rapid cross-cutting back and forth from sequence to sequence, always varying the pace. In fact, in technique this novel more than anything resembles a film script; it could be put on the screen more or less as it stands. When you reach the end, slightly dazed, the images of that winter are fixed on the inward screen of your mind forever; you know, with a sense of physical impact, in a way that no historian and few writers can convey, exactly what revolution and civil war meant to ordinary people. You realise that for the rest of their lives a whole generation will bear in minds and bodies the effects of that traumatic season spent under the ascendance of 'Mars—quivering, red'.

Superficially, *The White Guard* is closely linked with Bulgakov's *Black Snow: A Theatrical Novel,* which in fictional guise appears to tell how a poverty-stricken journalist full of ambition and unrecognised talent came to write a novel about the Civil War; how it was published in a brilliant but ephemeral literary magazine which collapsed after only printing half the novel; how it was read by the literary editor of a famous Moscow theatre and turned, with much agony on the author's part, into a play; how the author fell in love with the theatre, although profoundly disenchanted with the autocratic personage who ran the theatre . . . Basically this is the story of the genesis of *The White Guard* and its stage variant, *The Days of the Turbins,* and of Bulgakov's introduction to Stanislavsky and the Moscow Art Theatre where he was to work for ten years. *Black Snow* as it stands is in two parts (it is unfinished, so the parts are slightly unevenly balanced). The first or 'literary' part describes the pains and tribulation suffered by the naive

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young aspirant author, Maksudov, in trying to write his first novel 'by moonlight' whilst working in the daytime at the hated job of newspaper reporter, and simultaneously straining to be accepted into the weird, cliquey, fake-bohemian world of literary Moscow of the early twenties. By what seems a miracle the novel is published and the 'Independent Theatre' (alias the Moscow Art Theatre) commissions Maksudov to make it into a play. Thus begins the second or 'theatrical' part of the novel, and we move into the fascinating, enclosed, arcane world of the theatre.

Here Bulgakov's quite extraordinary gifts of wit, irony, and deadpan humour are revealed as a force with scarcely an equal in twentieth-century writing. In Russian literature he can be compared only with Ilf and Petrov for humour; with Saltykov-Shchedrin for the force of his critical satire; and with Gogol for his nervous, even neurotic, relish for the grotesque. Allowing for the differences in cultural climate, Bulgakov's nearest equivalent in Anglo-American literature would be an amalgam (if such can be imagined) of Edgar Allen Poe and Evelyn Waugh. Delighted readers can now relish the spectacle of this formidable talent addressing itself to the task of lampooning that great sacred cow of theatre—Stanislavsky—and his dedicated flock, the Moscow Art Theatre. For needless to say the character in the *Theatrical Novel* masquerading as Ivan Vasilievich is Stanislavsky. The shock on recognising him in this fierce caricature is all the greater because of the cult that has grown up around Stanislavsky throughout the world. Far from being captivated by the great man's legendary charm and genius, Bulgakov depicts him as a vain, tyrannical old bitch. Although prepared to acknowledge his talent as an actor, he remorselessly tears every other element of Stanislavsky's reputation to shreds until we are left with an emperor who is naked—except to his fawning court. His charm is revealed as no more than a tool with which to manipulate people, his dedication is unmasked as the purest egomania, his fostering of artistic talent as sheer favouritism; his famous 'method' has ossified into a set of idiosyncratic mannerisms deeply inimical to any spark of original talent. The harmony and unity which outwardly characterised the MAT is debunked as largely a sham. Riven vertically between the Stanislavsky devotees on one side and the protégés of Nemirovich-Danchenko (the latter included Bulgakov himself) on the other, there is an equally yawning horizontal gulf between the aspiring younger generation of actors and old stagers who are fiercely determined to go on hogging all the good parts. As Bulgakov adds stroke after stroke to his bitterly comic picture of backstage life, it becomes a matter of some wonder that this menagerie of inflated egos actually managed to stage a performance every night. It is of course a caricature and not a photograph, but like all great ironists he exaggerates and distorts for a purpose.

The fact is that the main episode which *Black Snow: A Theatrical*

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Novel purports to describe—the dramatisation and staging of *The White Guard*—was not the exasperating farce that he implies. In real life he got on well with the play's producer, Ilya Sudakov (who appears in *Black Snow* as Thomas Strizh), and although his attitude, like Jonson's towards Shakespeare, remained 'this side idolatry', Bulgakov was also on excellent terms with Stanislavsky and remained so for several years. Bulgakov's disillusionment with Stanislavsky, which was of that intensity peculiar to soured affection, dates from an event that took place ten years *after* the highly successful première of his first play.

IN 1932 Bulgakov wrote a tragedy entitled *Molière*. It records with great poignancy the last months of Molière's life when the great actor-playwright, after a life of exhausting struggle finally crowned with success, was harried to death by a clique of jealous hypocrites surrounding Louis XIV (hence the play's alternative title—*Kabala Svyatosh*, or *The Clique of Hypocrites*). The parallel with Bulgakov's own treatment by Stalin (it was written at a time when all his plays and short stories had been banned in the USSR and Bulgakov's plea to Stalin to let him emigrate had been rejected by a personal telephone call from the 'pock-marked Caligula') was intentional and evident to anybody who could read between the lines (i.e. everybody). Stanislavsky, who was under pressure to put on new plays by Soviet authors, accepted the play and intended to produce it himself, but he was ill when rehearsals were due to begin and handed over the job to another MAT producer, N. M. Gorchakov. Work on the play lasted four years (a long time even by MAT standards of perfectionism) and turned out to be an extremely unhappy experience for all concerned. In an attempt to disguise its thinly-concealed attack on the communist party and Stalin, Gorchakov turned the play into a conventional period melodrama. This infuriated Bulgakov, who flatly rejected Stanislavsky's repeated demands to rewrite the play. Rehearsals dragged on in an exhausting succession of rows and sulks. At long last came the première in February 1936, with Bulgakov still fuming and Stanislavsky prostrate with anxiety. The Soviet press understood the play's intention only too well, and after a blistering review in *Pravda* headed '*Vneshnii blesk i falshivoe soderzhanie*' (*Glittering outside, false inside*), which was at once echoed by every other newspaper, *Molière* was taken off after a run of only seven nights. The affair had shattered Stanislavsky and embittered Bulgakov, who severed his connections with the Moscow Art Theatre in a cold rage.

With its subject-matter antedated by ten years to his debut as a playwright, *Black Snow: A Theatrical Novel* is Bulgakov's revenge on Stanislavsky for the failure of *Molière*. It is probably one of Bulgakov's last works, written between 1937 and 1939–40. He knew that it would never be published in his lifetime; with grim irony he originally entitled it *Zapiski Pokoinika* (*Notes of a Dead Man*) and preceded the novel

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with a comic foreword in which he pretended that the book had been written by someone else who '. . . had no connection with playwriting or with the theatre in his life . . .'. Yet although the *effect* of the satire is deadly and much of the book was written under appalling circumstances —Bulgakov dictated the bulk of it to his wife when he was incurably ill with sclerosis of the kidneys, blind, and in constant pain—it is executed with an enchanting lightness of touch, a precision and a polished, muscular elegance of language which, compared with most Soviet prose writing with its flabby sentimentality, its windiness, and moral equivocation, is like an ice-cold draught of spring-water after a lifetime of tepid, flat lemonade. Although in conception a work of bitter catharsis based on autobiography, by its tremendous charge of imaginative voltage and its rich fantasy *Black Snow* is a work of art that far transcends its origin and genre; with its unique fusion of delicate realism, wry humour, and a nervous, disturbing sense of mystery, this novel has alerted literate Russia to the promise of one of the greatest virtuosi of Russian prose of this century.

THE fulfilment of this promise is to be found in the long novel, which although published eighteen months after the *Theatrical Novel*, was finished before it. This is *The Master and Margarita*, published in the November 1966 and January 1967 issues of *Moskva*, to the accompaniment of public excitement so far reserved for poetry-readings by Yevtushenko or Voznesensky.

Bulgakov began this book in 1928; it took ten years to write and almost another thirty years to be published. It differs from *The White Guard* and the *Theatrical Novel* in that, whereas these two had their origin as forms of exorcism of traumatic events in Bulgakov's life, *The Master and Margarita* is a novel of ideas brought to life in the guise of fantasy. Bulgakov's chosen technique has a long and distinguished literary ancestry; the Soviet scholar A. Vulis traces its origin to the satires of Menippus, a shadowy figure of ancient Greek literature none of whose works is extant, but who is known through other authors who copied his methods, of whom the most notable was Aesop. Without going so far back, Bulgakov is known to have been influenced by Lesage's picaresque satire *Le Diable Boîteux*, whilst for English readers the most illuminating parallel to his work is perhaps *Gulliver's Travels*, where Swift employs the device of a series of exotic journeys to express his caustic views on human folly. There is much in it, too, of Gogol—the 'Ukrainian' Gogol of witches, warlocks, and devils as well as the 'Petersburg' Gogol of *The Nose* and *The Diary of a Madman*. Echoes of Dostoevsky, in particular Ivan Karamazov, are there, and the debt to Goethe's *Faust* is explicit both in the book's title and in its epigraph, which is a passage of dialogue between Faust and Mephistopheles. Over it all there broods the uneasy sense of the immanent supernatural which Bulgakov shares (of course in his case it is conscious artifice) with E. T. A. Hoffmann.

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The time is the twenties and the Devil in person comes to Moscow. His infernal retinue includes two demons in more or less human form, a naked girl vampire with red hair, phosphorescent eyes, and putrescent breasts, and a huge black cat which talks, walks upright, smokes cigars, and is a dead shot with a Browning automatic. Deploying every trick of magic and necromancy, the Devil sets about creating havoc in Moscow. He kills people, sends others insane, removes some to distant places, puts on a scandalous music-hall act, and holds a full-scale witches' sabbath where women strip, rub themselves with magic ointment, and fly naked through the air on broomsticks. At last, satisfied with his stay, Satan departs, leaving behind him in Moscow asylums crammed with patients, the forces of law and order in disarray, and a population haunted by inexplicable feelings of shame and guilt. Some of the Devil's pranks have been sheer anarchic fun, but more often they have been chosen to bring out the worst in everybody. People are shown up in all their weakness, greed, cowardice, and gullibility. Merciless fun is poked at all the institutions that Bulgakov knew best and detested most—medicine, bureaucracy, the theatre, and the snobbish, clique-ridden literary world.

Amid this bizarre and hugely funny pantomime of slapstick and supernatural tomfoolery, two people somehow remain immune and undiminished by the Devil's malicious trickery. These two are the Master and Margarita of the title. The story of their passionate, unlucky, and illicit love-affair (Margarita is married to someone else) forms the wholly serious and very moving second level in this multi-layered book. The Master is a writer, a man single-mindedly devoted to the search for truth, who has poured all the wisdom of a lifetime into a book in which he grapples with the problem of good and evil. He does so in the form of a re-interpretation of the trial, execution, and death of Christ. It is not the Christian view. Bulgakov's Jesus is shorn of divinity and has no disciples except Matthew, who is, if anything, an embarrassment to him. It is a parable of what happens when a wholly good man is confronted by a narrow theocratic orthodoxy —first-century Judaism—and crushed by it because that orthodoxy depends for its *raison d'être* on the assumption that all men are basically evil and weak and must have an institutionalised form of good behaviour forced upon them. Pontius Pilate, a subtly-drawn and sympathetic character who is the central figure in this parable, is in search of truth: standing outside Judaism and detesting it for its harsh obscurantism, Pilate is intellectually convinced of Christ's innocence and intends to have his death sentence commuted. In the end Pilate's desire to save Christ fails because he lacks that vital, liberating spark of love and compassion which might have leaped beyond the confines of reason to defy both Judaic and Roman orthodoxy; he fails also because he, too, is the prisoner of an all-embracing system of thought—Roman law, according to which Christ is technically guilty.

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In this, the third level of his book, Bulgakov has produced an absolute *tour de force:* it is a complete novel within the novel, written in a triple-distilled prose of quite extraordinary power and totally different in style from the rip-roaring black humour of the 'Devil-in-Moscow' sequences.

In despair, then, because no publisher will accept his book on Christ and Pilate, the Master burns the manuscript and voluntarily enters a lunatic asylum. Margarita proves to Satan that she is literally ready to go through hell (the witches' sabbath passage) to save the Master's sanity so that he may rewrite his masterpiece. Admitting that even he cannot resist the spiritual strength represented by the Master's passionate dedication to his own vision of truth and by Margarita's totally selfless love for the Master, Satan consents to restore the manuscript for posterity, and to reunite the Master and Margarita—in death but for eternity.

No synopsis can possibly do justice to this remarkable book. As a philosophical disquisition in a fictional vehicle it is extraordinarily stimulating, yet it leaves a sense that there is still something missing; there is a feeling that Bulgakov just failed to place the keystone on his philosophical construct. The difficulty centres on his attitude to his Devil. Surrounded with all the traditional paraphernalia of diabolism, in the first half of the book Satan appears to play the accepted role of the Prince of Darkness—the cosmic mischief-maker and source of evil. Yet all the people that he has frightened and punished are themselves weak, cowardly, or corrupt, and in the end Satan's treatment of them looks more like a kind of divine justice. At the same time the Devil implicitly bows before the virtues of love, charity, loyalty, and faith, whilst appearing to treat the incorruptible Christ almost as a spiritual equal. To see this work as a schematised parable of the evils of Stalinism is a mistaken over-simplification. If anything, it is perhaps an attempt to construct a paradox—a humanist metaphysic, or perhaps it is a parable justifying a morality of Judaeo-Christian origin but without a God: man is at once his own God and his own Devil.

The enigma must stand for the moment. There is nothing enigmatic about the stature of *The Master and Margarita* as a work of art. Its language has all the virtues of Bulgakov's writing at the top of his bent, and by some magic the whole, despite the less than total cohesion of its parts in an intellectual sense, adds up to an aesthetic experience of the most satisfying completeness. Volumes and volumes of criticism and exegesis will be written on it in years to come. For the moment our happy duty is to enjoy what may well come to be regarded as the glory of twentieth-century Russian literature.

It is difficult to 'place' Bulgakov the novelist in any particular grouping of Soviet literature. Publicly he belonged to the theatre; his novel-writing (except for *The White Guard*) was very much a desk-drawer career. As a satirist he undoubtedly shares some common attitudes

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with Ilf and Petrov, though he might have denied this. His whole cast of mind seems to have been totally different from the miniaturism of Zoshchenko; nor was Bulgakov so stamped by his origins as was Babel, although he lacked Babel's fierce self-discipline as a writer: artistically Bulgakov suffers from attacks of quirky self-indulgence that may make people judge Babel the more finished writer. Temperamentally and artistically Bulgakov was perhaps closest to Zamyatin, whom he resembled in several ways: his lack of interest in realism for realism's sake; the primacy of his irrepressible fantasy, and above all his courage under the blows of fate and his faith in his own vision, which he believed—with justification, as we now know—to be stronger than 'principalities and powers'.

PUSHKIN

David Magarschack

Pushkin was a rebel, a gambler for whom cards were 'a fiery passion', a man often wildly in love and desperately jealous—a man of extraordinary energy who stormed through his short life. He died in 1837, killed in a duel by the alleged lover of his beautiful wife Nathalie. In this biography Mr. Magarschack reveals the man behind the writer of whom Dostoevsky commented 'It can be said positively that if Pushkin had not existed, there would have been no talented writers who followed him'. 26 Illustrations 63s

Chapman & Hall

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EDUCATION AND THE WORKING CLASS

Expansion and Advance

Solomon M. Schwarz

EVEN those who study Russia and are knowledgeable about the enormous economic shifts which have taken place there over past decades have frequently only a hazy impression of how profoundly the social make-up of the country has altered during the last 30–40 years. At the end of the twenties, on the threshold of the five-year-plan era, Russia was overwhelmingly a country of small peasant farming. In 1928 77·8 per cent of the population were peasants—74·9 per cent individual peasant farmers and 2·9 per cent collective farm members. By 1939 the peasants (almost all in collectives) accounted for just under 50 per cent; twenty years later the figure had fallen to 31, and in 1964 to 24·9. (This figure does not include some categories of agricultural labour, among them sovkhoz workers.)

Workers and employees (in the wide sense of the word), who had made up less than a fifth of the population in 1928, now constitute the overwhelming majority—more than three-quarters of the entire population.

To get a clearer impression of the dynamics of the numerical strength of the workers in the proper meaning of the word, one can use the figures given in the last census on the division of the entire working population into those engaged principally in physical labour and those engaged principally in mental labour and subtract from the first group the total for the peasants. The difference between the total for those principally engaged in physical labour and the total for the peasants gives a total for the workers in the proper sense of the word.

According to the 1959 census figures the population of the country totalled 208·8 million, of whom 99·1 million were employed. Of these 78·6 million were 'engaged principally in physical labour' and 20·5 million were 'engaged principally in mental labour'. Of the first, 32·5 million were peasants. The total number of workers properly speaking was thus 46·1 million. The three most important groups with the most clearly defined proletarian attributes—those in industry, building, and transport—numbered 18·3 million in 1939 and 32·2 million in 1959; the number of those in industry alone had risen in those years from 11·2 to 19·3 million.

Although the categories are not strictly comparable, the table below does give an approximate picture of the comparative weight of workers in industry and construction in relation to the total population (around 1960).

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	Industry	Building	Total (in millions)	Population	Per 1,000 of population
USSR	19·3	5·1	24·4	208·8	117
USA	17·5	2·9	20·4	180·7	113
Great Britain	9·6	1·6	11·1	52·5	136
West Germany	9·5	2·1	11·7	53·4	163
France	5·0	1·2	6·2	45·5	211
Belgium	1·3	0·2	1·5	9·2	219
Japan	10·0	2·4	12·4	93·4	133

Educational Standards

There has also been a qualitatively significant improvement in the cultural level of the working class, due above all to the marked rise in the general educational level. There is a widespread notion, both inside the Soviet Union and *a fortiori* abroad, that the disappearance of mass illiteracy and the development of popular schooling are basically a feature of the last forty years or so, and that up to 1917, so far as the mass of the people was concerned, Russia was a country where there was almost universal illiteracy. In fact, the question of 'universal schooling' was one which greatly concerned important sectors of society, especially those involved in local government, as far back as the 1860s. During the last quarter of a century before the first world war, popular schooling in Russia made considerable progress and the country was rapidly advancing towards the introduction of universal and compulsory schooling, though, it is true, only for children between the ages of 8 and 11.

In his well-known work on the history of educational policy in Russia from the beginning of the eighteenth century to 1917, Nicholas Hans, an Odessa pedagogue in charge of popular education in Odessa in 1917 under the Provisional Government, gives the total number of pupils in schools of every kind in Russia up to 1914. Hans worked on this book in England in the twenties and expressly made the reservation that because of the scarcity of sources available there his calculations could be regarded only as approximate. But they are cautious and inspire confidence. The number of pupils attending educational establishments throughout Russia (with the exception of Finland) totalled 2·5 million in 1890, 4·5 million in 1900, 7·2 million in 1910, and 9·5 million in 1914. Per ten thousand of population, this works out at 212—346—498—545 pupils.

Patent evidence of the growth of literacy is to be found in the increase in the number of literate recruits called up for military service. Under the article 'literacy' in the *Large Soviet Encyclopaedia* we find the following table:

Percentage of literates among new recruits

1880	1890	1900	1913
22	31	49	73

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At the beginning of the eighties almost four-fifths of all new recruits were still classified as non-literate, while in 1913 almost three-quarters were already literate. This was, of course, a very restricted literacy, but by comparison with the very recent past it represented considerable progress.

In 1915 the government introduced a draft statute on elementary schools which provided for the introduction of compulsory four-year schooling, to be brought in by rural and urban local government bodies and, where none such existed, by school boards. For failure to send their children to school, parents were liable to fines of up to 25 rubles for the school year.

In the Moscow and Petrograd regions 85·3 per cent of children in the relevant age bracket were attending school at this time. Though other regions fell short of this level, in 46 of them the percentage of school pupils to the total number of children of school age exceeded 50, and was rapidly increasing; 62 per cent of the *zemstvos* were due within the next five years to reach a level which would assure universal elementary education, and 50 per cent of them would require five to ten years to achieve this, while only 8 per cent were likely to fail to reach this level within ten years.

Owing to disagreements between the State Duma and the Council of State, and to difficulties with the government, this 1915 draft failed to obtain ratification before the onset of the revolution, but schooling continued to make progress until the years of civil war.

According to the subsequent calculations of the Central Statistical Administration, the total number of general educational schools (including secondary schools) in 1914–15 reached, within the future boundaries of the USSR (up to 17 September 1939), 105·5 thousand catering for 7·9 million pupils. There was a decline in this figure in the first years of the revolution, but it rose again in 1920–21, though still falling short of the 1914–15 level; after that there was a catastrophic decline. Later on, in 1926, the People's Commissar for Education, Lunacharsky, wrote:

> By 1921–22 our schools network had undergone an exceptional expansion. Exact statistical data put the figures at 91,000 schools with seven and a half million pupils. The number of schools had already declined to 75,000 by 1922 and then in 1923 to 69,000, while the total number of pupils fell away to 4,300,000. This was its lowest point.

But even these figures paint a somewhat more favourable picture than was the case in reality. The total number of pupils fell sharply in the first half of the twenties but the enormous growth in absenteeism was even more critical in its effects. The book by K. Bogdanov, head of the educational statistics department of the Central Statistical Administration, on *The Movement of Pupils in Elementary Schools and the Average Length of Attendance*, referring to the year 1924 notes that from the second year at school more than a quarter of those attending

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school (27·6 per cent of the boys and 32·3 per cent of the girls) went absent. 'Only one quarter of the boys and about one fifth of the girls get as far as the fourth year.' The average length of education of school entrants, according to Bogdanov's estimate, was 2·4 years.

In 1925 a decree was passed introducing compulsory elementary education for children between the ages of 8 and 11, but it remained on paper. Lunacharsky's article in *Izvestiya*, already quoted, summed up the one year's application—or rather, non-application—of the new law:

> Over the past three years the number of pupils has risen from 4,300,000 to 4,900,000. . . . But in fact the percentage of unsatisfied children from among those whose parents have applied for a school place for them is growing. Approximately 38 per cent of children who are seeking entry fail to get a place. . . . In setting out the general principles of the reform we have always taken the four-year school, the elementary school, as our point of departure. Yet it must be said that the four-year school is not the predominant type of school: in very, very many cases we have only three-year schools. But the worst of it is that our official four-year schooling is fictitious in the sense that here and there no fourth year exists, and there is the even more unfortunate circumstance that some 70 per cent of the poorest peasants never get to the third year. The result of absenteeism on the part of teachers and pupils and of the long summer holidays is that those children who complete their schooling have put in, in effect, no more than one year and nine months' study in terms of school workdays.

These figures testify to the exceptionally difficult position of popular schooling in the first decade after the revolution. The acuteness of the situation was mitigated by the so-called 'struggle for the liquidation of non-literacy' (or, in the original terminology, 'illiteracy'), waged in those years. This was an attempt to create substitute schools for adults ('non-literacy liquidation centres'), where within three months those attending could master reading, writing, and arithmetic without having to give up their daily work. Despite all the defects of this often unduly politically-angled and demonstrative campaign, the centres played a positive role in overcoming the most elementary forms of non-literacy.

It was only in August 1930 that a realistic decree was passed: the decree of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars providing for the introduction during the 1930–31 school year of compulsory schooling for children between the ages of 8 to 10, for the extension of compulsory education to the age of 11 in the following year, and for preparatory measures for the introduction of compulsory seven-year schooling. From then on compulsory schooling became firmly established. The curricula and the length of compulsory school attendance repeatedly changed; in the main, this was in the direction of expanding educational facilities. The results were substantial.

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According to the latest census figures, 281 persons per thousand of the population had received at least seven years' schooling as of January 1959. Among those aged 10 and above, 361 per thousand had received at least seven years' schooling and 310 had either completed elementary (four-year) school or had received incomplete seven-year education; thus 329 per thousand aged 10 and above had not received elementary education. Among these were children still attending school, and older people who had not attended school in their childhood. This latter group, a survival of the past, prevents a full evaluation of the scale of progress achieved. Hence the figures on literacy of the population between the ages of 9 and 49 given in the census present great interest. True, 'literacy' means something distinctly less than four years' education at school and is no more than a first step on the path to culture. But the fact that almost the entire population of the Soviet Union has this stage behind them is noteworthy. From this point of view, the following table is of great interest.

Literacy of the population between the ages of 9 and 49

(by percentage)

	both sexes	men	women
Population as a whole			
1897	28·4	40·3	16·6
1926	56·6	71·5	42·7
1939	87·4	93·5	81·6
1959	98·5	99·3	97·8
Urban population			
1897	57·0	66·1	45·7
1926	80·9	88·0	73·9
1939	93·8	97·1	90·7
1959	98·7	99·5	98·1
Rural population			
1897	23·8	35·5	12·5
1926	50·6	67·3	35·4
1939	84·0	91·6	76·8
1959	98·2	99·1	97·5

This means that to all intents and purposes the Soviet Union has become a country of almost universal if limited literacy.

Against the background of the rise in the educational level as a whole, the rise in the general educational level of the workers is all the more significant, and requires closer analysis. Exaggerated notions of the country's backwardness were less forcibly expressed in regard to the cultural level of the workers. The great part they had played in the development of the revolutionary movement made it impossible to attribute to them the total ignorance which had supposedly dominated the working-class milieu.

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Already in the last quarter of the nineteenth-century literacy had made notable progress among factory workers, mainly, it is true, among the men and only to a small extent among the women. Literacy in 1881 among textile workers in Moscow reached 36·3 per cent for men and 2·2 per cent for women. Among the factory enterprises of the Moscow region in the same year the corresponding figures were 33·0 and 4·7, among the factory enterprises of Bogorodsk district in 1883–84 41·3 and 5·8, and among the factory workers of the Kolomenskoe district in 1883 50·7 and 6.0. These, it is true, were in the Moscow region, where the level of literacy was somewhat higher than the average for the country as a whole. Even earlier figures exist for Petersburg: there literacy among workers in factory enterprises in 1862 reached 38 per cent; for metallurgical workers it was 49 per cent; in 1897 the corresponding figures were 63 and 73.

In the nineties literacy increased among women workers too. According to the 1897 census, the percentage of literate factory workers for European Russia as a whole reached 50·3; for men it was 56·5 per cent, for women workers 21·3 per cent. The years up to the war saw a significant rise, and by the autumn of 1918 64 per cent of factory workers were literate; the figure reached 79·2 per cent for men and 44·2 per cent for women.

In the twenties, characterised by an energetic struggle to liquidate non-literacy, particularly among factory workers, the literacy figures for workers rose substantially, reaching, according to the 1926 census, 88·2 per cent among men workers, 73·2 per cent among women workers, and for both sexes together 84·2 per cent. The census carried out by the trade unions in 1932–33 revealed only 4·6 per cent non-literates among all trade union members. By this time the literacy figure had already lost its meaning as an index to the cultural level of the workers, and a more useful criterion—that of schooling—was adopted. The campaign against non-literacy tended more and more to concentrate, not on imparting the rudiments of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but on affording those past school age who had failed as children to obtain elementary education the opportunity of receiving education at least to elementary school standard. It was at this stage that wide currency was given to the phrase: study without a break in employment.

The transition from the struggle against non-literacy to the struggle against semi-literacy was already in progress at the end of the twenties and at the beginning of the thirties, the years of the first five-year plan, when an enormous wave of new workers surged into the towns from the countryside. In this respect the following figures are typical:

Adults receiving education (in thousands)

	non-literate	semi-literate
1928	1247·5	218·7
1930	5771·5	922·5
1932	7663·6	6582·1

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The number of non-literates undergoing study in 1932 was six times as great as the number in 1928: in the same period the number of semi-literates receiving education on the basis of the elementary school curriculum rose thirty-fold. Among the non-literates a large number were workers; among the semi-literates the vast majority were workers. By the beginning of the forties the practice of providing workers who had not received adequate schooling with facilities for general educational study had begun to acquire the character of a mass movement; this was interrupted by the war only to revive again with new force after the war. Schools were established for young workers in the towns and to a lesser extent for young people in the countryside, and also schools for adults (mainly in the towns). In 1940–41 768,000 people were receiving instruction in these schools (some of the adults were receiving extramural instruction); after the war this figure was rapidly overtaken. By 1950–51 the figure had reached 1·4 million; a decade later it was 2·8 million, and in 1964–65 it rose to 4·7 million. The rate of increase was greater in the middle and higher school classes than in the lower;

	1950–51	1958–59	1964–65
		(in thousands)	
Classes 1–4	352	51	83
Classes 5–8	894	1,048	1,888
Classes 9–11	192	817	2,685

In 1950–51 24·5 per cent were in the lowest group, 62·2 per cent in the middle, and 13·3 per cent. in the top; in 1964–65, with a more than three-fold overall increase in the total, the number of pupils in the lowest group constituted a mere 1·8 per cent of the total, and declined absolutely; the middle group more than doubled in absolute terms, but constituted only 40·6 per cent of the total, while the top group increased fourteen-fold in absolute terms and accounted for 57·6 per cent of the total. To a large extent the increase was due to the transition to a 7-hour working day. For example, in 1958–59 about 1,700 young people at the Nizhne-Tagilsk Metallurgical Plant in the Sverdlovsk oblast were studying in these schools; in the following year, after the transition to a 7-hour working day, about 4,000 did so. This trend was vigorously encouraged both by propaganda and by the provision (without interrupting employment) of special facilities for study and to enable them to sit for examinations. During the war, a decree dated 15 August 1943, 'Concerning the teaching of juveniles in industrial employment', established the practice of granting paid leave of 20 working days to sit for the school leaving certificate examination, and of 15 days to sit for the seventh year final examination. A later decree, 21 June 1945, extended these provisions, which were then also applied to pupils taking evening and extramural (correspondence) courses at higher educational establishments and at secondary special educational establishments.

The postwar years brought very substantial changes. In 1939 the

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number of those principally engaged in physical labour who had received not less than seven years' education amounted to 43 per thousand; the corresponding figure for 1959 was 316. For workers as a whole the corresponding figures were 82 and 386. For the later year, 1959, the figure was roughly equal for men and women—393 for men and 377 for women. Figures for a number of industries are given below.

Number of those with not less than seven years' schooling per 1000 workers

	1939	1959
mining	55	407
metallurgy	176	535
printing	190	640
textiles	60	478
clothing	69	565
leather	40	318
building	30	318

The change between 1939 and 1959 was largely determined by the enormous growth of the working class. Among the new workers a substantial number were in younger age groups with a considerably higher educational level. The 1959 census gives figures for the educational level of the workers by age group.

Educational level of workers by age group
(percentages)

age group	full 7 year education or better	full 4 year but less than 7 year education	less than 4 year education
20–24	61·7	33·7	4·6
25–29	34·2	54·9	10·9
30–34	39·9	50·1	10·0
35–39	37·3	43·2	19·5
40–44	20·8	30·5	48·7
45–49	10·2	31·6	58·2
50–54	7·3	27·9	64·8
55–59	4·9	22·4	72·7

What is striking is the marked shift at the junction of the 35–39 and 40–44 groups. The 40–44 age group was the first of whom the majority (a small majority, it is true) finished the four-year primary school. In the 35–39 age group the number completing primary school rose to 80·5 per cent, and of those nearly one half went on to complete their seven-year schooling. Since then there has been a steady rise in the educational level of the workers, thanks in particular to the greater influx into industrial employment of secondary school graduates. The number of workers with not less than seven years' schooling has by now probably reached 50 per cent of the total, and in many industries has exceeded this figure.

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Professional and Technical Education

In the second half of the nineteenth century the question of professional instruction began to attract widespread attention. K. D. Ushinsky, an eminent Russian pedagogue, wrote in 1868 in the *St Petersburg Chronicle* that the country stood in 'spiritual and economic need' of 'trade schools', and that this would be a patriotic undertaking, since the training of Russian apprentices and craftsmen would free industry from dependence on foreign labour.

From the late eighteen-sixties the movement to set up professional schools, in part attached to industrial enterprises, in part independent of them, began to take on an organised character, especially with the creation in 1868, under the Imperial Russian Technical Society, established two years earlier, of a permanent commission for technical instruction. In 1880 the government issued 'General Regulations on Industrial Schools' which, by the standards of those times, were fairly progressive. Attempts to attract private contributions to the cause were not unsuccessful. More than fifty years later a communist author wrote: 'During the five years from 1889 to 1894 alone 1,640,000 rubles were donated to the creation of technical schools and colleges. The railway magnate, F. V. Chizhov, bequeathed 5·5 million rubles to the setting up of technical schools in the Kostroma region and N. P. Trapeznikov, the gold-mine owner from Irkutsk, gave 3 million rubles, etc.'

On 1 January 1910 there were 2,151 educational establishments, with 116,093 pupils, for the preparation of junior and medium level cadres for industry, mining, trade, and transport. This was, of course, little enough, given the level at that time of Russian economic development, but it was a promising beginning.

During the first years of the revolution industry lost a substantial number of workers and the problem of cadres soon became acute. The position deteriorated still further as a result of the dogmatic nature of official policy which was, as the Commissar for Education, Lunacharsky, later put it, 'highly revolutionary but undoubtedly "impractical", being based on the idea of compulsory general education and polytechnical instruction up to the age of 17, accompanied by a ban on professional-technical training up to that age, which simply resulted in the closing down of the majority of the existing technical schools in which youths under 17 had received their training'. Soviet policy-makers began early on to think in terms of overcoming the dearth of worker cadres by means of compulsion, and from 1918 onwards, and particularly in 1920, a large number of decrees were issued on such matters as compulsory professional-technical training for juveniles and for adults, and on labour service in general.

In February 1920 a committee on labour service was set up and, characteristically, the person appointed to be its chairman was the head of the Cheka, Dzerzhinsky. On 29 July the Council of People's Commissars adopted a decree on professional-technical instruction which

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declared that all workers between the ages of 18 and 40 were liable to compulsory training, and provided that the Committee on Labour Service should place at the disposal of the Committee on Professional Training the necessary quota of persons from other sectors of the population. Two years later—on 2 May 1920—the Central Executive Committee issued a decree on 'a minimum establishment of juveniles in factories' which provided not only for this guaranteed juvenile quota, but also, implicitly, for their compulsory professional-technical training. The guaranteed quota remained in force up to the beginning of the thirties, but lapsed (without any formal announcement) with the inauguration of the plan era.

The entire conduct of factory apprenticeship, based largely on the guaranteed juvenile quota, had many shortcomings, of which the chief was, perhaps, the numerous and almost capricious changes. Hence the scheme fell far short of providing the economy with an adequate supply of trained workers. But with all its defects it had one, perhaps unexpected, positive result: it implanted in the mind of the public, and especially in the mind of the workers, the beginnings of the tradition that it was necessary to study and especially study one's profession, that one would be lost without proper training, and that one should study not only in one's youth before taking up a job but for years and years thereafter. This tradition had a decisive effect on later developments and contributed in no small degree to the raising of the professional-technical level of the Soviet working class.

Shortly after the quiet death of the guaranteed juvenile quota, the tradition was strongly reinforced by a decree adopted on 30 June 1932 by the Council of Labour and Defence, 'On the Compulsory Training of Workers Manning Complex Assemblies, Installations or Machinery' or—the text of the decree went further than its title—'performing other responsible or dangerous work'. 'All jobs associated with the carrying out of such work may, after a fixed period, be held only by workers with an established minimum of technical knowledge, and possessing credentials to this effect', that is, with certificates showing that they had passed the examination for the compulsory technical minimum.

The idea of an obligatory technical minimum immediately spread beyond the guidelines laid down by the decree to factories other than those specified, including light industry enterprises. At 1 January 1936 the total number of workers who had passed the technical minimum examination was 815,892 for the People's Commissariat for Heavy Industry, and 177,324 for the People's Commissariat for Light Industry. In December 1935 the Central Committee put this practice on a general footing and decreed that 'the categories of men and women workers who are obliged to study for their technical minimum must be systematically expanded', with the aim of 'making the technical minimum training general and compulsory for all'.

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The extension of the application of the idea of the technical minimum was accompanied, it is true, by an appreciable reduction in its content. The decree of the Council of Labour and Defence was meant to introduce the technical minimum for skilled workers employed on specially responsible work, and the minimum was high. The *general* technical minimum amounted, for the great majority, to mastering the rudiments of technical knowledge and expertise. Hence two minima were established—category one and category two, the first for those who had not yet started work and the second for those workers who were improving their qualifications (this was basically the so-called retraining of cadres). The following figures were published for 1937 and 1938 for those who had obtained their technical minimum in one or the other category:

	1937	1938
In industry and building:		
First category	1,292,077	1,155,528
Second category	154,802	156,815
In transport and communications:		
First category	262,290	694,985
Second category	20,046	65

The later thirties saw a sharp rise in mass professional-technical training. Instruction in the technical minimum (category 1) was supposed to last from one to six months, but many workers continued studying in one or another form after having taken the examination. There was also a considerable number of people who improved their skills outside the system of the technical minimum. In all, 'mass technical study in 1936–39 embraced about 15 million people, including 7,860,000 studying for the first category technical minimum and 396,000 for the second'. As with almost all Soviet statistics of this kind, these figures are probably inflated and require readjustment. Yet whatever the correction required, the mass character of the trend cannot be questioned.

Instruction was by individual and brigade-type apprenticeship, while there was a falling-off in school training, which had developed in the form of schools of factory apprenticeship (FZU) in connection with the juvenile quota system but had very quickly expanded beyond this framework. In the years of the second and third five-year plans the number of FZU schools declined sharply, and the number of pupils even more sharply. The need for school preparation of cadres, however, did not disappear, but re-emerged in 1940 with the creation of the system of the State Labour Reserves schools.

This somewhat unfortunate designation was used in an edict of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, dated 2 October 1940, instituting a system for the training of skilled workers and workers for mass occupations in specially created trade schools with a two-year course, and in 'factory training schools' (FZO) providing a six-months course for training semi-skilled workers. The pupils were recruited by call-up

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(mobilisation) from juveniles aged 14–15 for the two-year schools, and from those aged 16–17 for the six-month courses. Throughout their course in the labour reserve schools the pupils were wholly maintained by the government and did not take on any factory job (this distinguished the trade schools and FZO schools from the FZU schools of the twenties and thirties which had been largely populated by juveniles and young workers who were in a job, i.e. studying 'without a break in employment'). But on completing their labour reserve course the pupils were obliged to put in four years work in state enterprises at the direction of a special Main Administration set up to manage the entire labour reserve system.

Before outlining further developments, a few words need to be said about the fate of the technical minimum. The expansion of the second category technical minimum which was designed to satisfy the need for skilled labour had met with great difficulties. For its part, the first category technical minimum, which was of a genuinely mass character, often amounted to little more than rudimentary briefing of new workers. During the war the situation deteriorated still further and the content of the first category technical minimum was whittled down, though it rose again after the war. This was due to the urgent need to impart a certain minimum of technical knowledge to workers who had come into industry during the war and also to those who had entered it after demobilisation without the necessary technical knowledge. This, however, was only a temporary measure. The system of the technical minimum as a separate form of professional-technical training was clearly retreating into the background and from the beginning of the fifties no longer counted, being partially dissolved into the complex and polymorphous system of professional-technical training.

After the war a diversified system of professional-technical training came into being which both trained new workers and catered for a substantial number of those already in employment, who were improving their education 'without a break in employment', as well as, not infrequently, switching over, at a higher level, to continue their education, this time 'with a break in employment'. The latter category was, for the most part, though by no means invariably, a stage in the transition from the ranks of the workers to those of the technical intelligentsia.

The creation of the labour reserve schools was the last attempt at the compulsory formation of skilled cadres. Even during the second half of the thirties incentive elements were beginning to develop alongside compulsion within the systems of professional-technical training.

After the war the incentives provided for studying—not only technical but also general study—were expanded and gradually became an integral feature of working life. Concessions were granted to those taking courses, both juveniles and adults, the chief one being one day a week off from work in which to study; specific guarantees on wages

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were introduced, and restrictions imposed on overtime work and on their being sent away on assignments: for those doing extramural (correspondence) courses additional leave was given for sitting the oral, written, and practical examinations; managers were instructed to see to it that workers who had improved their qualifications were, so far as possible, transferred to better-paid work; special concessions were instituted for those temporarily absent on courses or attending secondary special or higher educational institutions.

Official statistics on the professional-technical training of workers are partly inflated. A degree of mistrust is also evoked by the figures for those studying in professional-technical schools; establishments of this sort (almost all involving a 'break in employment') are said to have trained 1,475,000 workers in 1941–45, 3,392,000 in 1946–50, 2,364,000 in 1951–55, and 3,286,000 in 1956–60. For the years 1961–64 the annual figures are given as 739,000, 888,000, 915,000, and 943,000.

This gives a total of slightly over 15 million over 24 years. That is perhaps within the realm of possibility, but the published figures on the training of workers at factories, and the raising of qualifications of workers by training given them at factories, sound quite fantastic. In the 25 years from 1940 to 1964 the factories on these figures would have trained 61,992,000 new workers and in addition, 90,742,000 workers would have improved their qualifications.

To these must be added the 15 million training in professional-technical schools. But the size of the working class (not only in industry but in all branches of the economy) has never reached this figure in the Soviet Union. These figures are hardly possible even if one and the same lot of persons were counted not once but two, three, or four times over. But, however unreliable, these figures do testify to one thing: that the training of workers during their employment—both primary training and training for requalification—assumed enormous proportions. And this process continues.

The training of workers (without a break in employment) in secondary special and higher educational establishments is marginal to the subject of this article. The overwhelming majority of them do not carry on as workers on completing their education but transfer to the ranks of the engineering and technical intelligentsia, the administration, etc. Yet the fact that many workers combine working at a job with extramural training directed from higher or secondary special educational establishments retains its importance as an indicator of the ardent pursuit of education within the working class.

Unfortunately we have no statistics on the social composition of the pupils of higher and secondary special educational establishments, but it is beyond doubt that of their evening and extramural students—that is, those who are studying without a break in employment—workers constitute the overwhelming majority, and in higher educational establishments a very high percentage. Extramural and evening students—

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and this applies particularly to higher educational establishments—now constitute more than half the total number of those attending. At the beginning of the 1964–65 academic year there were 3,608,000 students in higher educational establishments, 1,574,000 of them day students, 506,000 evening, and 1,588,000 extramural. Of the 3,326,000 students in secondary special educational establishments at the beginning of the 1964–65 academic year nearly one half (49·2 per cent) were day students.

The enormous effort already expended and still being expended by millions of workers on raising their professional-technical level, as well as the efforts of the administration and economic authorities could not fail to result in a significant increase in the professional knowledge and expertise of the workers, which was bound to be reflected in a far-reaching regrouping by qualifications of the entire mass of the workers. To a certain degree this has happened, but on a manifestly inadequate scale, and probably for this reason the Soviet press deals only casually and infrequently with questions concerning the changes in the classification of workers according to qualification and, consequently, within the wage-scale framework: at best, the question of the growth—or rather, the inadequate growth—of the number of workers engaged in mechanised labour at the expense of workers engaged in manual labour is given some airing in public.

In 1954 the Central Statistical Administration carried out a survey of workers in industry and building which showed that, for industry as a whole, manual labour—in terms of number of workers employed—accounted for 62·1 per cent and mechanised labour for only 37·9 per cent. Moreover, manual labour not directly susceptible to mechanisation (assembly and repair work, etc.) accounted only for 17·9 per cent of this, while manual labour susceptible to mechanisation but not yet mechanised, accounted for 44·2 per cent.

Such a state of affairs does, of course, prevent workers from making full use of their own industrious application to study, and creates a danger that their interest in raising their professional level may begin to cool. This has, however, not been noticeable to date.

Workers, Specialists, and the Party

It would seem that the vast expansion of the working class and the substantial advance in its cultural and professional level should have social consequences and be accompanied by greater working-class influence throughout the Soviet social and political system. Given the exceptional role of the communist party in that system, any strengthening of the working class position within the system would be first reflected in the composition of that party.

The central committee report to the twenty-third party congress in March 1966 gave the following figures for the party's social composition on 1 January 1966 (for party members and candidates): workers, 37·8 per cent; peasants, 16·2 per cent; employees and others, 46·0 per cent. Brezhnev added:

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> As is evident from these figures, the majority of our party consists of workers and collective farm members. Of recent years the percentage of workers among those admitted as candidates has risen. Whereas workers made up 40·6 per cent of candidate members accepted during the period between the twentieth and twenty-second congresses, the corresponding figure for the period under review is 47·6 per cent. The working class must in the future too occupy a leading position in the social composition of the party.

In fact, the most cursory analysis shows the situation to be complex and quite different. In the twenties, especially immediately after Lenin's death, the number of workers among communist party members really was very high and was increasing. Many of them, it is true, were soon promoted to administrative, economic, and party posts while continuing to figure in party statistics as workers on an equal footing with 'workers in production'. Moreover, beginning in 1924, the number of communists among workers in production proper continued to grow. It has been estimated that workers in the party increased from 17·0 per cent of the total membership in 1923 to 48·6 per cent in 1930. Using the term 'workers' in the wider sense, the corresponding figures were 44·9 and 68·2.

There had been an acute awareness of the abnormality of a state of affairs in which workers properly speaking were a minority in the communist party, and the thirteenth conference in January 1924 (a few days before Lenin's death) emphasised the need for a change in its resolution on party structure:

> Active worker-communists who should, of course, be the link between the party and the non-party masses are almost entirely absorbed in administrative and economic work and are thus inevitably cut off from production. Hence the basic task in this field is the recruitment of new party members from workers at the bench. Party organisations must pay particular attention to this category of people and do everything possible to ensure that they are not cut off from work in production. . . . Work on expanding the proletarian nucleus of the party must in the months ahead form one of the most important tasks of all party organisations.

The thirteenth congress in May 1924, meeting after the start of the 'Leninist call-up', fervently supported this plea:

> The party must be firmly imbued with awareness that the entire party has to take its cue from its basic workers' nucleus. Hence the recruitment to the party of workers from the work-bench, the line adopted by the party in accordance with the decision of the thirteenth conference, is of enormous importance for its future. Our slogan must be to see to it that within the course of the next year more than half the party's strength is made up of workers from the bench. This slogan must in the main determine the tasks of our entire party work for the period immediately ahead.

In the years following, these decisions did exert a considerable influence

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on the party's composition, but a movement in the reverse direction set in at the beginning of the thirties: the percentage of workers (in the broader sense) began to decline, and the leaders could think of nothing better than simply to cast a veil of secrecy over all the relevant facts. But we can get some idea of the processes at work in the first half of the thirties from the composition of delegates attending communist party congresses.

Percentage of workers among delegates to communist party congresses

	1922 XI	1923 XII	1924 XIII	1925 XIV	1927 XV	1930 XVI	1934 XVII
Workers, in the wider sense	47·7	53·0	63·2	62·0	71·0	71·2	60·0
Workers, properly speaking	n.a.	n.a.	11·4	n.a.	18·4	17·7	9·3

The overwhelming majority of workers in the wider sense at the seventeenth congress (1934) were former workers who were now largely cut off from the mass of the workers. It is hard to believe that the workers at large derived any satisfaction during those painful years from Kaganovich's speech at the sixteenth CPSU congress (1930), when he proudly stated that 56 per cent of the chairmen of industrial trusts were workers, that workers accounted for 45 per cent of the members of the boards of the trusts, and that 71 per cent of factory directors and 69·4 per cent of their deputies were workers. Later the position got still worse, and in the reports of the mandates commissions to the congresses in 1939, 1952, and 1956 there was no mention of the number of workers among the delegates.

The abnormality of this situation and the danger that the mass of workers might feel alienated from the Soviet state evidently began to alarm the communist leaders, and the twentieth congress, in its resolution on the central committee's report, required party organisations 'to intensify their concern for the individual selection of outstanding people for the party, above all from among workers and peasants'.

In the report of the mandates commission at the twenty-first congress (1959), twenty-four years after the information had last been given, there again appeared a diffident semi-pointer to the number of workers among congress delegates: '399 workers and collective farm members were elected to the congress, or 78 more than at the last congress'. At the following congress in 1961, a further small step ahead was taken: among 4,408 delegates with a full vote there were 984 workers, brigadiers and foremen in industry, transport, and communications, and 469 collective farm members, state farm workers, brigadiers, and collective farm and state farm section heads, that is 22·3 and 10·6 per cent respectively of those with a full vote. Of the 4,963 delegates with a full or consultative vote at the 1966 congress, there were 1,141 workers

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(i.e. including both brigadiers and foremen) in industry, building, transport, and communications, and 554 collective farm members and state farm workers, link leaders, brigadiers and section heads, or 23·0 and 11·2 per cent respectively.

What do these scanty amalgamated figures show about the specific weight of workers within the communist party, and especially about those who are not only workers by origin but are actually employed in industry? In the No. 1, 1962 issue of *Partiinaya Zhizn*, and again in No. 10, 1965, there were articles from which we learn that the number of workers on the strength of the communist party (including candidates) was 32 per cent in 1956, 35 per cent in 1961, and 37·3 per cent in 1964. These were all workers 'in terms of their social position determined by their basic occupation at the moment of their induction into the party'.

The increase over the last decade is probably to be explained by the sharply increased influx into the party during these years of engineering-technical employees, many of them of working-class origin. But, given the comparatively slow increase in the party of the percentage of workers in the wider sense, that is, former workers and genuine workers taken together, and the rapid growth in the percentage of former workers, it is possible that the percentage of workers properly speaking in the party may even have dropped over recent years.

This supposition is at first sight contradicted by other figures published in the same two articles: workers accepted as candidates accounted for 30·4 per cent of all accepted candidates in 1955, 43·1 per cent in 1960, and 45·3 per cent in 1964. At the time total membership was 7·2, 9·3, and 11·8 million.

Given this expansion, the very substantial rise in the percentage of workers among the new candidates should have been reflected in the percentage of workers in the total membership. But this did not occur. While the numerical strength of the party rose between 1 January 1956 and 1 January 1965 by 63·4 per cent, and the percentage of workers among the yearly intake rose by 49 per cent, the specific weight of workers on the strength of the party increased between 1956 and 1964 only by 16·6 per cent and between 1961 and 1964 by as little as 6·6 per cent.

This means that the percentage of workers was considerably lower among the members and old candidate members of the party than among the new candidate members. And this gives still further ground for reflecting on the fact of the intensified influx into the party of young engineering-technical employees promoted from the working class but often classified as workers when joining the party. It is probably not by accident that the communist leaders treat with such apprehension the very idea of the need to distinguish between workers by social origin and workers by present employment, that is, between former workers and workers properly speaking. In the twenties this was

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accepted as something essential. Nowadays the thought is resolutely though silently put aside.

These figures invite the inference that both the social weighting and the influence of the workers inside the communist party is declining, but they do not permit total certainty on this score. The conclusion needs checking against other facts.

What is the social composition of the communist party today? Are any distinct tendencies as regards its future development apparent? And what is the specific place in the party of the workers? We have already seen that the total number of workers in the wider sense, i.e. former workers and workers properly speaking, at the time of the twenty-third congress was 37·8 per cent of the membership. How many of these were workers properly speaking, workers in terms of their present employment?

It is doubtful whether the summons of the twentieth congress for the intensified recruitment into the party of industrial workers had any serious and prolonged effect. Whereas the percentage of workers in the wider sense of the word inside the communist party at the beginning of 1966 reached 37·8, that is 4,714,000 workers out of a total of 12,471,000 members and candidate members, the total of workers properly speaking was, of course, considerably more modest. If one starts from the optimistic assumption that they made up 60 per cent of the total number of both former and genuine workers (and this is probably an exaggeration but it guarantees that the total we derive will be the maximum possible), it follows that there were about 2,828,000 workers properly speaking among the members and candidate members of the party at the beginning of 1966. The total number of workers in all branches of the economy was 46·1 million at the time of the 1959 census. By the beginning of 1966 it was not less than 63 million; this means an average of one party man for every 22 workers.

In industry the position is, of course, better. Let us be cautious and suppose that the number of workers in industry rose by only the same percentage as the number of workers and employees in all branches of the economy, that is, by 36·1 per cent, and so reached somewhat over 27 million by the beginning of 1966 (which probably understates it). Let us also suppose that industrial workers in the party constitute 80 per cent of the workers in the party in all branches of the economy (which is probably overstating matters), and that the total of those in the party working in industry reached 2·25 million at the beginning of 1966: this would give one out of every twelve industrial workers in the communist party. If the number of industrial workers were greater than we have assumed and, *a fortiori*, if the percentage of industrial workers to workers as a whole in the party were lower, then only every thirteenth or fourteenth industrial worker would be a member or candidate member. To grasp the meaning of these figures we must take a closer look at the party's social composition.

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The most characteristic feature throughout its development over the last two decades is the enormous growth within the party of the specific weight of specialists with higher or secondary special education, especially of engineers and technicians, and of late of agronomists and other agricultural specialists. Party members already constitute a high percentage of specialists of all types, and this percentage is constantly growing. The first of the *Partiinaya Zhizn* articles referred to above gives the following table for the total number of specialists with higher and secondary special education and for the number of communists among them:

Communists among specialists
(in thousands)

	Total of specialists	Number of communists	Percentage of communists
1928	521	6·4	1·2
1 January 1941	2,401	494·8	20·5
1 January 1956	6,257	1,744·2	28·0
1 January 1960	8,784	2,495·2	28·5

Unfortunately the later article does not carry this table forward, but it does give figures for the number of communist specialists from 1 January 1961 up to 1 January 1965. These show that their number increased by 37·7 per cent over these five years. If one puts these figures together with the figures given in the 1964 Statistical Yearbook for the total of specialists with higher or secondary special education for the period from 1 December 1960 to 15 November 1965, which show an increase of 28·1 per cent, it is not difficult to work out that the percentage of communists among them had risen by 1 January 1965 to 30·6 per cent. This was for specialists as a whole (including teachers, doctors, etc.). The percentage of communists among engineering-technical and agricultural specialists is higher and may, perhaps, already approach 40 per cent.

So much for communists among specialists. Of no less interest are the figures for specialists among communists. It, too, is high and constantly growing, from 31·8 per cent in January 1961 to 34·6 in January 1965. From this point of view the composition of recent party congresses is of great interest. At the twenty-second, of 4,406 delegates with a full vote there were 975 engineers and economists and 260 agronomists and other specialists with higher or secondary special agricultural training. Together the two groups accounted for 28 per cent of all delegates with a full vote. At the next congress, of 4,943 delegates with a full or consultative vote there were 1,484 engineers, economists, and technicians, and 493 agronomists and others. Both groups together accounted for 39·8 per cent of the entire congress.

To sum up: if all specialists with higher or secondary special education are taken into account, probably one in every three is a member

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or candidate member of the communist party. Among engineering-technical employees the average is probably one communist to every two and a half of them, and the time may not be far distant when one out of every two will be a member (or candidate member) of the communist party. Among workers in the national economy as a whole only one in twenty-two, and among workers in industry only one in twelve is a communist. The specific weight of communists among specialists of all types with higher and secondary special education is, relatively, seven times as great as among workers in all branches of the national economy as a whole; the specific weight of communists among industrial workers is one-fifth of engineering-technical employees.

Moreover, the absolute figure for all workers is considerably higher than for all specialists with higher and secondary special education, while the absolute number of industrial workers is considerably higher than the absolute number of engineering-technical employees. Party membership does not reflect this: even in absolute terms the number of specialist-communists is greater than the number of worker-communists. For the first, the figure at 1 January 1965 (we have no later figures) was 4,063,530, while the overall number of worker-communists in the wider sense was at the beginning of 1966, according to Brezhnev's figures, 4,714,100, of whom 2,824,000 were workers in the proper sense of the word, if we accept the probably optimistic estimate that 60 per cent of all those classified as workers are actually engaged in that capacity.

Even in industry the total number of workers properly speaking is already lagging somewhat behind the total of specialists. If one accepts (as was done above) that 80 per cent of worker communists are employed in industry, then the total number of industrial worker communists at the beginning of 1966 reached two and a quarter million. But the total of specialists with higher and secondary education employed in industry already numbered 2,293,000 in November 1964, and in addition there were a number of qualified industrial engineers, communists, engaged in economic administration, research, design, etc. Does this not suggest that the workers were being steadily thrust into the background within the communist party? The vast growth of the working class in the Soviet Union, and the very substantial rise in its cultural and professional level, have not so far found their reflection in the development of the Soviet socio-political system.

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MOSCOW'S FOREIGN POLICY

Vernon V. Aspaturian

THE balance-sheet of Soviet foreign policy over the past fifty years shows an impressive range of accomplishments when measured against a comparable period for any other power of similar magnitude. An outlaw state in 1917, governed by a pariah regime, beset on all sides by powerful enemies, racked internally by social convulsions, civil war, fragmentation, and foreign occupation, whose chances for survival were extremely poor, the Soviet Union stands today as a modernised global power, second only to the United States in power, prestige, and influence. This evolution was no orderly unilinear development, preordained by history, but rather the outcome of periodic collisions between utopian hopes generated by ideology and the limitations imposed by the interests and ambitions of other states. For while it is true that 'the record of Soviet diplomacy shows an inability to distinguish between the real and the imaginary, a series of miscalculations about the capabilities and intentions of foreign countries, and a record of clumsy co-ordination between diplomacy and propaganda', it is also true that the many spectacular failures of Soviet foreign policy have been more than matched by its spectacular successes.[1]

The incalculable factor of luck has undoubtedly played a crucial role in the successes of both Soviet external and internal policy, beginning with the revolution itself, although Soviet leaders have not been loath to capitalise on the follies and misjudgments of other states. If luck was the principal ingredient which explains Lenin's success in seizing power and preserving it against an impressive array of internal and external enemies, whose failure to co-ordinate their actions was decisive for the survival of the Soviet regime, luck was even more emphatically the crucial factor which rescued Stalin's Russia from defeat and annihilation during the second world war. Stalin's misjudgment of the internal social and political forces and trends in Germany in the years before Hitler's assumption of power, his near catastrophic miscalculation of the balance of power between the Axis and the western powers in 1939, and his imprudent rejection of all evidence of an impending German attack, by all logic should have resulted in the destruction of the Soviet state; but fate intervened in the form of Churchill's decision to accept Russia as an ally and Japan's attack upon Pearl Harbour which brought the United States into the war.

It would be absurd, of course, to attribute all Soviet successes in foreign policy to sheer luck, just as it would be unfounded to ascribe them all to an innate shrewdness of Soviet leaders, who perceived every opportunity, exploited every advantage, and capitalised on every blunder

[1] Max Beloff, *Foreign Policy and the Democratic Process* (Baltimore, 1955), p. 98.

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with uncanny astuteness. Since success and failure in foreign policy are highly relative and often symbiotically interdependent, it is both captious and self-deceiving to pretend that Soviet 'successes' are in reality little more than the 'failures' of other states. Yet it would be difficult to quarrel with George Kennan's judgment that 'the standard components for a rousing Soviet diplomatic success' are 'one part Soviet resourcefulness and singlemindedness of purpose, two parts amateurism, complacency, and disunity on the part of the West', and that it was this which enabled the Soviet Union to advance from 'the initial weakness of 1921 to the pinnacle of power and success it occupies in the wake of World War II'.[2]

Throughout most of its history, Soviet foreign policy has operated within a self-defined framework of a two-camp or bi-polar world with two basic players, communism (the Soviet Union) and capitalism (everybody else), so that all losses in the capitalist world were automatic gains for the Soviet Union. While such an image of the world was a crude distortion of reality, it is true that the Soviet addiction to this grim view could not but redefine the international situation and superimpose upon international politics the synthetic impression of a zero-sum game whereby a loss for one player was automatically a gain for the other. For nearly two decades the Cold War was pursued within this framework as the bi-polarisation of power around Moscow and Washington increasingly assumed the objective character of a zero-sum game as defined by Moscow and increasingly by western statesmen as well in response. The disintegration of the European colonial empires, the advent of weapons of instantaneous and universal destruction, the progressive dissolution of the Soviet bloc, the erosion of the NATO alliance, and the eruption of the fratricidal Sino-Soviet conflict, however, have all but destroyed the bi-polarised international community in which gains and losses could be registered with zero-sum gamelike simplicity.

WHILE Soviet foreign policy achievements are impressive, this does not mean that the Soviet Union today has fulfilled the expectations of its founders and leaders, past and present. Actually, its present status and position in the world community represents a blend of objective success and subjective failure, i.e. it has been a resounding success when its achievements are measured against the traditional yardstick of power politics, but a conspicuous failure when measured against its initial ideological inspiration and purpose. Instead of transforming the world, it is the Soviet Union which has been transformed. From a self-anointed centre of world revolution dedicated to the destruction of the existing social and political status quo, it has been objectively transformed into a mature global power whose interest in stabilising the status quo now virtually matches its dedication to revolution. From an

[2] George Kennan, *Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin* (Boston, 1961), p. 223.

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embryonic world communist state the Soviet Union has been objectively metamorphosed into an arrested Russianised multinational community, burdened by supplicants and blessed by clients and allies as well as harassed and tormented by enemies and rivals in both the sub-community which it inspired and created as well as in the world which it sought originally to subvert. From a self-perceived instrument of history ordained to save mankind from the evils and injustices of capitalism and mandated to construct a new world communist society of universal justice, liberated from class, national, and racial conflict, the Soviet Union is now content to offer itself as a model for rapid modernisation and industrialisation of underdeveloped societies, with its eschatological and apocalyptic rhetoric largely muted. And finally, its ideology has been transformed from a vehicle legitimising world revolution into one legitimising communist rule in Russia; instead of raising the standard of revolution abroad, Moscow emphasises raising the standard of living at home in the name of ideology; instead of justifying further social changes in the Soviet system, it rationalises the social status quo; instead of inspiring the masses to charge the barricades, Soviet ideology now erects barricades against the heresies of Peking.

If we employ the traditional criteria of success in foreign policy (power, influence, and prestige), it is indisputable that the Soviet Union has been more successful than any other state in the past fifty years, save the United States. The most significant factor in the simultaneous rise of Soviet power and decline in the power of other states was the second world war. Germany was dismembered and occupied; Japan was squeezed back into her main islands and disarmed; Italy was shorn of her colonial empire, while a weakened France, Great Britain, and Netherlands progressively relinquished theirs. During the same period, the Soviet Union annexed 250,000 square miles of territory in Europe and Asia, established vassal and subservient states in east Asia and eastern Europe, displacing Japan and Germany respectively as the dominant powers in those two regions. It supported a successful communist take-over in China, sponsored the growth and proliferation of communist parties abroad, which it manipulated as instruments of its foreign policy, and continued to maintain the largest military establishment in the world poised to move into new vacuums which might be created by the convulsions and agonies of colonial empires in dissolution and by the internal turmoil and political uncertainties which swept western Europe in the post-war period.

Although the Soviet Union has certainly failed in its original ideological mission of communising the world, its half-century attempt has left a lasting imprint upon the physiognomy of the globe and has fundamentally restructured the social, political, economic, and ideological configurations of one-third of the world and reoriented the direction in which the rest is moving. As a consequence of its endeavours, an

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international sub-system of fourteen communist states, comprising nearly one-third of the world's population and territory, has been established. These fourteen states not only share a common ideology, of which individual variants have emerged, but a common socio-economic system with a distinctive set of property relationships, giving rise to a shared social structure, governed and regulated by highly similar political institutions and processes.

Furthermore, communist parties, large and small, powerful and insignificant, are to be found in some seventy additional countries on five continents, ranging from miniscule and furtive illegal conspiratorial groups to large mass parties, such as those in France, Italy, and India. All these parties are inspired by variants of a common ideology, Marxism-Leninism, and are thus derivative emanations from the Bolshevik revolution of 1917.

THE failure of the Soviet Union to achieve its ideological goal of universal communism is largely attributable to American power, which grew even more rapidly and spectacularly than Soviet power. Unlike the Soviet Union, however, the United States was a status quo power. Ironically, its strength was largely sustained and accelerated by the remarkable expansion of Soviet power and the threat it posed to the world at large. Unlike the growth of Soviet power, which was largely relative, due in large measure to the destruction of the great powers on her periphery, the growth in American power was largely incremental and absolute, although it experienced a relative enhancement of its power as well resulting from the corresponding shrinkage in the number of great powers after the war. While the Soviet Union avidly fell heir to the power spheres left vacant by the collapse of Japan and Germany because of its advantageous geographical position, the United States, reluctantly, erratically, and often inadvertently, progressively assumed the burdens carried by the declining and retreating western European powers. What the United States lacked in geographical advantage it more than made up for by its control of the seas, its inexhaustible economic resources, and its atomic monopoly. From the Soviet perspective, the only obstacle in the way of communist universalism was the American 'ruling class' armed with nuclear weapons, and Soviet postwar foreign policy for over a decade was largely designed to nullify, immobilise, neutralise, skirt, surround, or even destroy this impediment, which ultimately proved impassable and insurmountable.

The failure of Soviet foreign policy to find its way around American power signalled the success of the containment policy which had been inaugurated in 1947. It is a silent but eloquent tribute to this policy that when the great colonial empires dissolved, not a single former colonial dependency was sucked into the communist orbit (save North Vietnam), although the Soviet Union had devoted considerable thought, energy, effort, and expense to capitalise upon an event which Soviet leaders had been predicting and expecting for decades.

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Both Lenin and Stalin had formulated elaborate theories of colonialism, imperialism, and 'bourgeois-nationalist' revolutions; they framed imaginative strategies of multi-staged revolutionary upheavals and multi-phased transition processes designed to adapt the exotic political ferments and forces in the colonies and semi-colonies to the general Marxist historical perspective. If ever a political leadership was psychologically poised and intellectually prepared to take advantage of one of history's most extensive and profound shifts in the global balance of power, it was the Soviet leadership, which had repeatedly predicted and eagerly awaited the revolutionary disintegration of the colonial empires, from which they expected a flood of recruits to the world of communism.

But the colonial empires dissolved in more or less orderly fashion into more than sixty new states, which were then shielded by the power of the United States from being sucked into the Soviet orbit. The American shield, however, not only protected the new states from being absorbed by the communist world but it also had the unfortunate effect in many cases of protecting unsavoury and oppressive native systems and regimes from their own disaffected populations, and this was bound to drive a wedge between the United States and many non-communist revolutionary movements and regimes in the new states. Thus, while the containment policy succeeded in arresting the expansion of Soviet and/or communist power, it also had the distressing tendency to contain and limit the range of non-communist options open to many of the new states in order to organise their social and political life.

DEPRIVED first of its self-asserted character as an embryonic communist world state and then effectively denied its role as the centre of a world revolutionary movement articulating the interests of mankind, the Soviet Union was forced by objective circumstances to revert more and more to its irreducible role as a traditional great power, responding and reacting to its own national interests. And the more it reverted to its character as a great state, the more the other communist countries were likely to act as autonomous states rather than as parts of an organic movement.

The recrudescence of the nation-state as the state form of the communists has thus effectively demolished the pretensions of the Soviet Union as an embryonic universal state and has in effect forced its transformation into a modern version of the Russian Empire, purporting to represent the national interests not only of Russia but of all the major nations of the USSR.

These profound transmutations and revisions in the communist world have shattered the Marxist-Leninist expectation that a common ideology and a common social system would first surmount and then eradicate conflicts of national interests among communist states. After the reams of ideological nonsense written about the character of the

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new socialist international system, founded on the basis of mutual trust, harmony of interests, and the absence of conflict, it must come as a profound shock to Soviet ideologists to be now charged with the thankless task of justifying the dissolution of the communist bloc and explaining the Sino-Soviet dispute. Thus one Soviet writer, obviously dismayed by the gross inadequacy of Marxist-Leninist propositions, ruefully concedes that relations among socialist states, in spite of a common ideology and similar socio-economic systems, are still determined by factors traditionally associated with national distinctions:

> The formation of the world socialist system—a commonwealth of sovereign socialist states with equal rights—gave rise to a number of great theoretical and political problems which communists had never encountered before. . . . When the international relations among national detachments of the working class turned into relations between states, a new situation arose that required creative application of the general principles of Marxism-Leninism, the development of a number of propositions of the theory and actualisation of political decisions. How are the national and state interests of each socialist country to be brought in line with the interests of the entire system? How are the diverse interests of separate socialist states to be harmonised? How is the turbulent flow of national consciousness and national pride, caused by the success of socialist construction and the acquisition of genuine national independence, to be directed along the course of socialist internationalism?

He then concedes the essential naïveté of the orthodox Marxist-Leninist proposition that a common social system would be sufficient to eradicate conflicts of national interests:

> In our time such a formulation of the question seems natural and even trite. But to arrive at it required more than a year of intense searching that was frequently accompanied by practical errors and theoretical confusion. Let us recall the state of theory before the opening of the sixties. A formula of approximately this sort was set forth: All socialist states are of the same socio-economic nature, they have the same types of political power, and the same ideology prevails in them; consequently, there should not and cannot be any disagreements or contradictions in the relations among the countries of socialism. The very fact of the establishment of socialist production relations in a number of countries was considered to be an adequate guarantee of good relations among them, a guarantee that national and international interests would somehow automatically be harmonised.

Ideology, he points out, foundered on the traditional shoals of national interests, whose diversity and contradictory character have their source in the national peculiarities of history, culture, geography, and socio-economic development, whose significance had been seriously underrated. Optimistically, but without much conviction, the writer

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maintains that concerted policy should be able to overcome the baneful effects of national interests:

> Life has proved to be more complicated and contradictory than this formula. The actual practice of contact among the countries of socialism has shown that this homogeneity of socio-economic, political, and ideological structures is a necessary but insufficient prerequisite for the real establishment of the principles of fraternity and cooperation, complete trust and mutual understanding in the relations among socialist states. Historical experience bears witness to the fact that a complex intertwining of objective and subjective factors connected with the considerable disparity in the levels of socio-economic development of the individual countries of socialism, with differences of an historical-cultural and geographical nature, and with varying degrees of cognisance by the various parties of the laws of development of socialism, can lead in practice to deviations from the internationalist principles which are supposed to regulate relations in the socialist commonwealth. And an abstract reliance on the fact of a single type of ownership or state power is of no help here. Only the conscious, purposeful policy of the ruling communist parties is able to neutralise the influence of factors that lead to collisions and contradictions. Such a policy presupposes a determined fight against attempts to present what is desired for what is real and to put actual problems of the socialist system in a simplified, bureaucratically optimistic form. Such a policy is based on the fact that each socialist state may have its own national interests, connected with peculiarities of its history, geographical location, economic development, etc. This is a fact that, when understood, is of direct significance for correct—both theoretically and politically correct—application of the basic principles of relations among socialist states.[3]

The failure of the Soviet Union as a universal state should not, however, obscure its achievements as a traditional great power. In many respects, the current position of the Soviet Union exceeds the fondest aspirations of its Tsarist predecessor. Russia's historical irredenta have been largely reincorporated into the Soviet Union, and the new Soviet empire has been consolidated into an integrated and stable modern society, with a broad base of social and multinational support; the country is substantially self-sufficient militarily and economically; it presides over a retinue of client and allied states in eastern Europe; a dismembered Germany lies impotent in the west, a disarmed Japan has been shoved back into its indigenous islands in the east, and a belt of weak buffer states carved out of colonial empires lies to the south. Only the revival of an expansionist China threatens the Soviet Union as a state and as the abortive leader of a residual revolutionary movement.

WHEN Lenin established Soviet power in the former Russian Empire, he thought not only that he could sever irrevocably the

[3] A. Bovin, 'The International Principles of Socialism', *Izvestiya*, 21 September 1966.

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umbilical cord with Russia's past but that he could also rid the new state of traditional Russian goals and purposes in foreign policy. Neither geography, nor history, nor national interests would govern the behaviour of the Soviet state in its relations with the outside world; rather its outlook and conduct would be uniquely and exclusively determined by its self-anointed ideological mission of world revolution as inspired by the doctrines of Marx and Engels. There is little doubt that at first Lenin was genuinely convinced that this was possible and that the new Soviet state could unilaterally unburden itself not only of Tsarist purposes and goals in foreign policy but also of Russia's heritage and culture, could overcome the deterministic influences of its geography, surmount the complex aggregate behaviour patterns of its population (national character), relieve itself of the manifold liabilities and dispel the enmities acquired by its Tsarist predecessor in the pursuit of its aims, and of whatever designs, claims, grievances, and demands Russia's enemies might have against her. All this, however, was more easily asserted than accomplished, for while Lenin could plausibly abjure the goals and purposes of Russia's traditional foreign policy and could selectively retain the fruits of four centuries of Russian expansionism wherever possible, he could not entirely disown the objective consequences of Tsarist diplomacy nor dictate the attitude of other states towards the new regime. Even if the Soviet state refused to remain Russia, Japan remained Japan, Poland remained Poland, Germany remained Germany, the Straits remained the Straits, and Russians remained Russians.

Thus, partly by choice, partly of necessity, and partly against its will, the Soviet state could not but assume many of the contours of its predecessor in foreign policy. This fact served not only to complicate Soviet foreign policy for many decades but also to plunge into seemingly insoluble and futile controversy all discussion and analysis concerning its motivations and nature. Was the Soviet Union motivated by traditional Russian national interests and manipulating revolutionary ideology as an instrument of its national purposes, or was Russia merely the national vehicle for a messianic universalism?

While there is no intention here to rehash the innumerable variations on this theme, ranging from the pathetically simplistic to the inordinately sophisticated, with virtually all possibilities in between, some comment is indispensable. After fifty years, the role of ideology in Soviet foreign policy, as both a source of ends and an instrument of other purposes, emerges more clearly and can now perhaps finally be placed in definitive perspective. Historically, ideology appears as a protean force and influence on Soviet foreign policy behaviour, shaping its eschatological goals operatively rather than operationally, and also as a cognitive and epistemological philosophy, embracing a theory of socio-historical reality, a theory of human nature and behaviour, and a theory of international and interstate behaviour. Instrumentally, ideology has

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also functioned as a theory or strategy of action, i.e. as a framework for the analysis, mobilisation, and manipulation of social and political power in a variety of conditions and circumstances. It has enabled Soviet leaders to recognise that interstate and intrastate social conflicts, tensions, frustrations, and resentments are potential reservoirs of energy which can be tapped, mobilised, and transmuted into concrete political power subject to the manipulation of Soviet policy. In calculating what the Soviet leaders call the international correlation of forces, internal social forces and the direction of their movement have always assumed an important value in the balance-of-power equation. Furthermore, ideology serves to justify and rationalise Soviet behaviour and the social status quo in the Soviet Union; it serves as the foundation of legitimacy upon which Soviet rule reposes and provides ethical sanction for the extension or intensification of Soviet power.

THE relative influence of ideology as a motivating factor in Soviet foreign policy has been indissolubly linked with the utility of the world communist movement as an instrument of Soviet foreign policy. Hypothetically, the Soviet state was merely the creator and advance guard of a wider entity, the international proletariat, but not its directing centre. This was the theory. It simply represented the Russian national section of the international proletariat which had seized power in its own country. Consequently its policies and behaviour were supposed to reflect the interests of the world revolution and the international proletariat, which would be determined by the Comintern and its Executive Committee. Instead of being the master of the Comintern, the Soviet state was supposed to be its instrument. But since the Soviet state was the only communist state in existence and the headquarters of the Comintern could be located only in Moscow, it was inevitable that, as prospects for additional revolutions faded away, the position of the Soviet party would be correspondingly enhanced and its role transformed.

The Soviet state soon assumed an identity and existence of its own, separate yet related to that of the Comintern. As a state, the conditions for survival were sharply different from those of a movement whose existence, independent of state organisation, was still possible. Consequently, the Soviet Union gradually assumed the contours of a traditional state operating within a system of states, yet in conflict with it. It assumed a configuration of interests not entirely congruent with those of the revolutionary movement, since the impulse and requirements for survival as a state frequently collided with its obligations as an instrument of the Comintern and the world revolutionary movement.

The entire history of Soviet relationships, first with foreign communist parties, then with communist states, and then with rivals for leadership, has been determined by the two essentially contradictory purposes of either serving the interests of foreign constituencies (world

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revolution, foreign communist states, China), or responding to the interests of internal constituencies (survival as a state, national interests, Soviet elites). The first purpose necessarily implies self-abnegation since it demands that the interests of the Soviet Union's internal constituencies be subordinated to the interests of external constituencies, while the second is subversive of internationalism, since it gives higher priority to internal needs than to external obligations.

Tension between these two conflicting sets of demands was inevitable and not capable of easy resolution. One purpose was bound to subordinate the other. Either the Soviet state was to become an expendable instrument of the international proletariat, or the Comintern would be reduced to a creature supinely responsive to the demands of the Soviet state. This contradiction was resolved by adjusting the interests and behaviour of the Comintern and foreign communist parties to those of the Soviet state. Comintern interests were thus reshaped and subordinated to Soviet state interests in order to ensure full coordination of action and congruence of interests. This, of course, ran counter to the theory of their relationship, since the interests and behaviour of the Soviet state were supposed to be adjusted to meet the demands and requirements of the Comintern. The orthodox rendition of the Stalinist formula ran as follows:

> The USSR has no interests at variance with the interests of world revolution, and the international proletariat naturally has no interests that are at variance with the Soviet Union.[4]

The basic philosophy justifying this submission to Moscow's control was defined by Stalin as 'proletarian internationalism':

> A revolutionary is he who, without evasions, unconditionally, openly, and honestly . . . is ready to uphold and defend the USSR. . . . An internationalist is he who unconditionally, without hesitation and without provisos, is ready to defend the USSR because the USSR is the base of the revolutionary movement, and to defend the advance of this movement is impossible without defending the USSR.[5]

With the installation of communist regimes in the countries of eastern Europe, the Soviet Union was automatically deprived of its unique position as the only communist state, whose ruling proletariat pre-empted the articulation of the class interests of the entire world proletariat languishing in oppression and exploitation in capitalist countries. As long as the Soviet Union was the only communist state, it could be argued that good communists everywhere should display first loyalty to the only fatherland of the proletariat. Loyalty, however, was not founded on the inherent moral superiority or priority of interests of the Soviet proletariat over all others; the international proletariat gave its loyalty to the Soviet Union on the premise that the Soviet Union was

[4] W. K. Knorin, *Fascism, Social Democracy and the Communists* (Moscow, 1933).
[5] J. V. Stalin, *Sochineniya* (Moscow, 1949), X, p. 61.

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the only authentic representative of the class interests of proletarians in all countries. That it was the Russian proletariat which ruled the first communist state was historically fortuitous and legitimised neither its moral nor its political superiority.

Stalin, however, extrapolated his meaning of 'proletarian internationalism' from the period of 'capitalist encirclement' into the period of multiple communist party-states, each with its own ruling proletariat. Proletarian internationalism became, in effect, a device for converting party subservience into state vassalage. Entire countries were subjugated and their interests subordinated to that of the Soviet state. Some satellite leaders, however, demurred and interpreted the Stalinist theory of proletarian internationalism as applicable only to parties in capitalist countries; otherwise it was a philosophical justification for Soviet imperialism and colonialism. The divergence of interests between the Soviet Union and foreign communist parties, particularly those in power, was exemplified by the break with Yugoslavia in 1948, and the potential character of the conflict was discernible when Stalin directed the execution or removal of satellite leaders who betrayed even a faint tendency towards national autonomy—all in the name of proletarian internationalism.

WHILE Stalin's death set the stage for the disintegration of the world communist movement into its constituent state and national parties, ironically enough the underlying cause of the divorce between Soviet interests and those of other communist parties was the rapid growth of Soviet power and capabilities. Hypothetically, this should have brought Soviet ideological goals into closer alignment with policy; but as Soviet power grew, so did the risks and costs of implementing an ideological foreign policy. And as these increased, the general tendency was for Soviet ideological goals to crumble into ritualistic rhetoric, while the growth in Soviet power created greater opportunities and more options for the achievement of traditional great-power goals in foreign policy. Thus as Soviet power has increased to the point where ideological purpose could have been converted into state policy, there has been a corresponding tendency for the costs and risks of converting ideology into policy to escalate as well. As Peking has been quick to point out, the expansion of Soviet capabilities has served to debase some cherished ideological goals into little more than propaganda rhetoric.

In the fourteen years since Stalin's death, the Soviet Union has been forced to adjust itself to changing configurations of interests and power at home, in the communist interstate community, in the world communist movement, and in the international community at large, which has resulted in a fundamental shift of priorities in Soviet foreign policy.

While Stalin subordinated the interests of foreign communist states

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and parties to the security and foreign policy interests of the Soviet state, he rarely viewed the material prosperity of the Soviet population as a significant factor in coordinating Soviet interests with those of the communist movement. Stalin catered to internal constituencies only to the degree necessary to maximise the effectiveness and power of the state at his command. Once the communist monolith started to disintegrate into its component parts, and external constituencies could articulate their demands upon the Soviet Union to discharge its international ideological obligations in accordance with the theory that the Soviet Union was a servant of the movement and not its master, Stalin's successors, under pressure from their own internal constituencies, altered both the priorities and the theory underlying them, so that in both theory and practice the interests of Soviet social constituencies now assume priority over those of external constituencies.

Not only does the Sino-Soviet dialogue on this point demonstrate how international ideological commitments can be subordinated to internal economic requirements by a developed and an underdeveloped communist state sharing a common ideological commitment; it also illustrates how each perceives its ideological obligations in such a way that their implementation automatically serves the internal interests of the state concerned. Thus, while Moscow asserts that rising Soviet standards of living help to promote world communism, Peking contests this view and argues that the world revolution can best be furthered if the developed communist states postpone their affluence in favour of bolstering up the economies of their deprived communist allies. In either case, it reduces itself to the crude formula 'What's good for the Soviet Union (or China) is good for the world revolution'. While in the past this formula was applied by Stalin almost entirely in terms of the foreign policy and security needs of the Soviet state as the bastion of the world communist movement, it is only since his death that this formula has been applied to purely domestic economic considerations. To be sure, Moscow insists that raising the standard of living in the Soviet Union strengthens the most powerful state and hence alters the global balance of power in favour of world revolution, psychologically if not militarily; but this proposition is both dubious and transparently self-serving. It also serves to support the Chinese charge that in the face of possible thermonuclear war, the Soviet leaders have lost their revolutionary militancy and may be willing to settle for a status quo which will allow them to divert resources and energies from a counter-productive and dysfunctional policy of revolutionary aggressiveness to improving the standard of living at home and expanding and consolidating the social legitimacy of their power and authority as a great power.

SOVIET foreign policy over the past fifty years has thus passed through a succession of distinct phases, each with its characteristic patterns of behaviour shaped in accordance with a changing mix of

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personalities, perceived interests, ideology, and objective capabilities. A change in one variable has always significantly altered the impact of the others with corresponding reciprocal feedback effects.

When the Bolsheviks seized power and proclaimed eternal war against all capitalist states, the permanent diplomatic isolation of the Soviet state appeared inevitable; yet, during the fifty years of its existence, the Soviet state has achieved diplomatic recognition by a world it was committed to liquidate, has entered into commercial relations with capitalist states, has formed alliances with a variety of bourgeois powers which it earlier condemned as wicked and hostile, joined international organisations which it previously denounced, formed military coalitions with capitalist states against common enemies, divided the spoils of power-politics and conquest, and alienated powers which it previously courted, and wooed states which it had previously condemned or shunned.

While the dictates of Soviet ideology imposed upon the Soviet Union a unique diplomatic unilateralism, the realities of power-politics forced upon it an equally unique dualism: accommodation to an existing system of states which it was dedicated to destroy.

We can demarcate two broad periods in Soviet foreign policy, linked by an overlapping transitional phase, whose basic parameters can be defined in terms of the Soviet Union's relative power position in the world at large and of the balance between capabilities and intentions or demands in foreign policy. The first, which can be described as the period of relative impotence, covers the years 1917–39, during which time Soviet intentions and demands greatly exceeded objective capabilities and Soviet leaders were principally preoccupied with maintaining a balance between their ideological utopianism and the imperatives of survival in a more powerful hostile environment. This period gradually merged into the second, extending from 1944 to the present, during which time the Soviet Union was transformed from a relatively weak power into a great power, then a super-power, and finally a global power, when its objective capabilities increased to the point where some of its ideological goals were realisable and rhetoric was converted into concrete policy, resulting in the partial transformation of a world communist movement into a communist interstate system. The years 1940–43 (actually the period between the German-Soviet pact and the Red Army's expulsion of the Germans from Soviet territory) were both a transitional phase overlapping the two periods and a watershed dividing them.

Each of these two broad periods passed through a succession of diplomatic stages or phases, dominated by a particular strategy, reflecting the increasingly sophisticated employment of various instruments as Soviet leaders became accustomed to the methods of international politics and diplomacy, in response to changing perceptions of interest,

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alterations in the balance of power, and shifting opportunities in the international scene.

After 1921, when foreign intervention failed to strangle the new regime and the prospects for communist revolutions elsewhere had faded, Lenin was forced to acknowledge an objectively imposed balance of power between the new Soviet state and the outside world, which Stalin was to conceptualise as the objective strategy of 'peaceful coexistence' and to institutionalise as the 'dual policy' whereby the Soviet state would accommodate itself to international realities while the Communist Party through the Comintern would simultaneously endeavour to alter them.

The Stalinist image of the world was one of imposed coexistence between a single socialist state and a hostile capitalist environment—a coexistence forced upon both antagonists by objective historical conditions. It was not conceived as a subjective norm of Soviet foreign policy, as many in the West appeared to believe, but rather as a condition which the Soviet Union would have to accept on a temporary basis; since neither side was sufficiently powerful to liquidate the other, they were fated to exist together temporarily on the basis of an unstable and constantly shifting balance of power:

> The fundamental and new, the decisive feature, which has affected all the events in the sphere of foreign relations during this period, is the fact that a certain temporary equilibrium of forces has been established between our country . . . and the countries of the capitalist world; an equilibrium which has determined the present period of 'peaceful coexistence'.[6]

The temporary equilibrium was not to be upset so long as the Soviet Union was in a weakened condition. War between the two camps was inevitable, but could be temporarily avoided and delayed by astute manoeuvring within the conflicts raging in the capitalist world:

> England's attempts to form a united front against the USSR have failed so far. The reasons for this failure are: the antagonisms of interests in the camp of the imperialists. . . . Hence the task of taking into account the antagonisms in the camp of the imperialists, of postponing war by 'buying off' the capitalists. . . . We must not forget what Lenin said about very much in our work of construction depending upon whether we succeed in postponing war with the capitalist world, which is inevitable, but which can be postponed either until the moment when the proletarian revolution in Europe matures, or until the moment when the colonial revolutions have fully matured, or lastly, until the moment when the capitalists fight among themselves over the division of the colonies.[7]

During Stalin's lifetime, despite his periodic strictures against 'dogmatism', this image of the two-camp world remained remarkably fixed,

[6] J. V. Stalin, *Political Report of the Central Committee to the 14th Congress of the CPSU* (Moscow, 1950), p. 8.
[7] J. V. Stalin, *Political Report . . . to the 15th Congress* (Moscow, 1950), p. 29.

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although the centre of the anti-Soviet conspiracy passed from England to nazi Germany and finally to the United States.

Before the war the Soviet Union sought to maximise its security against the capitalist world while simultaneously seeking to subvert it. Not only did Moscow utilise 'contradictions' and conflicts of interest among bourgeois powers in the pursuit of its aims, when it aligned itself with Weimar Germany at Rapallo in 1922, and at Genoa in the same year excited the appetites and competition of capitalist countries with the prospects of a giant Soviet economic market which proved illusory; it also capitalised in its propaganda on the widespread desire for peace and disarmament. Furthermore, it sedulously sought the protection of the traditional norms of international law as it pursued diplomatic recognition and negotiated treaties of neutrality, non-intervention, and non-aggression with neighbouring states. Soviet leaders recognised that international law, although bourgeois in inspiration and largely ineffectual, afforded some incremental security value, and they eagerly sought whatever protection it might provide in spite of its obvious marginality. Thus the Soviet Union sought diplomatic recognition, more avid for de jure than de facto, but happy to accept either, and betrayed an unexpected solicitude for the sanctity of international legal norms like 'diplomatic immunity', 'non-intervention', and 'state sovereignty', which she had no real intention of observing at all. After all, these were bourgeois legal norms, and if Bolsheviks had little respect for the legal norms of their ideological and class enemies (which was understandable), this was no reason for bourgeois states to contravene and outrage their own cherished legal and moral precepts; ordinary decency required that their behaviour towards the Soviet Union should be governed accordingly. While under few illusions that capitalist powers would be limited by either moral self-restraint or international law in dealing with Moscow on matters involving vital interests or security, the Soviet leaders recognised that in ordinary conditions international law would probably function as a restraining influence, and the Soviet state would have to be treated as a member of the international community in good standing by those states with whom it had diplomatic relations.

LEGAL protection was, of course, insufficient as a security shield, and so the Soviet Union searched for limited political arrangements which might enhance her security. Although the Soviet position on international law was the classic status quo posture, in its political attitudes the Soviet regime associated itself with the anti-Versailles or revisionist group of European states, notably Weimar Germany, a fellow international pariah (political rather than ideological), and from 1924 to 1934 Soviet policy was oriented towards Germany. The Rapallo agreement of 1922 was followed by a neutrality pact in 1926 and supplemented by informal military collaboration. Until 1932, Moscow considered France, Britain, and Poland to be her 'immediate' enemies,

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and thus she automatically associated herself with their potential capitalist adversary, Germany. The Soviet government supported revision of the Versailles Treaty and in general supported the Germans against the victors of the 1914–18 war.

This seemingly idyllic partnership, however, was rudely complicated by Anglo-French diplomacy in the form of the Locarno Treaty (1925), which was designed to prevent German-Soviet collaboration from being converted into a possible anti-Versailles military alliance. By opening up the prospect of satisfying German revisionist demands at the expense of Moscow should the necessity arise, the British and the French provided another possible option to a revitalised Germany. Just as Moscow was utilising Germany's revisionist resentments against the Anglo-French powers (the chief centres of anti-Soviet sentiment), the British and French contrived the Locarno formula, which the Soviet leaders accurately recognised as a potential inducement to Germany to turn East should her appetite for territory become uncontrollable. The western powers would not be predisposed to interfere with the satisfaction of these aspirations in the East, particularly if they served simultaneously to minimise or eradicate the contagion of Bolshevism, if, in return for this demonstration of unconcern for the status quo in the East, the Anglo-French powers received a solemn German renunciation of all territorial claims against the West, thus *politically* reaffirming the legal provisions of the Versailles Treaty in this connection.

Locarno thus impelled the USSR to search for new instruments of security, and once again her resourceful statesmen and diplomats were able to convert bourgeois international law to their own purposes. Since the League of Nations was viewed as an anti-Soviet organisation inspired by the fear of Bolshevism and preserved as the skeletal structure of a future anti-Soviet coalition dominated by the same powers which sought to divert Germany eastward at Locarno, Moscow saw little profit in searching for security in the League. Consequently, Soviet diplomacy entered into a new phase, during which Moscow reinforced whatever protection was afforded by diplomatic recognition by the device of contractual arrangements with neighbouring states which, since they required only passive reciprocal political obligations, would not entangle the Soviet Union in any positive commitments to bourgeois powers. This took the form of concluding a series of neutrality and non-aggression treaties with virtually all her border states and possible sources of aggression. By these treaties the signatories undertook to remain neutral if one of them was involved in war, and to refrain from engaging in or supporting aggression directed at the other party. Since these treaties did not entangle the Soviet Union in positive obligations to capitalist states, the Soviet leaders continued to congratulate themselves on retaining their Bolshevik virtue intact, although it was obvious that this was a further step in the reinvolvement of Russia in the European balance of power. Furthermore, it did serve to counteract

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Locarno in some degree, since the Soviet Union succeeded, between 1926 and 1932, in negotiating treaties of this character with virtually every neighbouring country, including Germany and Poland, the two potential spearpoints of any future anti-Soviet crusade.

With the advent of the nazi regime in Germany, however, Soviet diplomacy was once again channelled into a new phase.

The revisionism of nazi Germany was as dangerous to France as to Russia, since Hitler openly repudiated the military provisions of the Versailles Treaty, reoccupied the Rhineland, and denounced the Locarno Treaty, signifying his refusal to accept the territorial status quo in the West. Stalin at first refused to take Hitler's anti-Bolshevism seriously, and only reluctantly severed his connections with the principal revisionist power of Europe. But eventually he had to seek a rapprochement with the most powerful bulwark of the status quo on the European continent, France. German revisionism constituted a greater immediate danger to French security than communism, and similarly German expansionist aspirations eastward appeared to be a greater threat to Moscow than the *cordon sanitaire* policy of France. The Franco-Soviet military alliance of 1935 not only signified the resurgence of traditional alignments, based on national interests and not ideology; it also constituted a new and important shift in Soviet strategy. For the first time, the Soviet Union formally allied itself with one bourgeois power against another. Even more fundamentally, this shift in alignment for the first time openly subordinated the interests of world revolution to Soviet security interests as the Comintern was instructed to arrest its revolutionary agitation in bourgeois countries friendly to the Soviet Union and to seek the formation of anti-fascist fronts and popular front governments in alliance with bourgeois parties. In effect, the Soviet Union abandoned a revisionist foreign policy in favour of a temporary support of the status quo.

In 1934 Stalin explained this reversal of policy not only in terms of the German danger; it also reflected outside respect for growing Soviet power:

> Change for the better . . . has taken place recently in the relations between the USSR and Poland and between the USSR and France. As is well known, our relations with Poland in the past were not good. . . . The relations between the USSR and France were no better. . . . What is the cause of this change? . . . Primarily, the growth in the strength and might of the USSR. In our times it is not the custom to give any consideration to the weak—consideration is given only to the strong. Besides, there have been some changes in the policy of Germany which reflect the growth of imperialist and revenge sentiments in Germany.[8]

At the same time, he justified the change almost exclusively in terms of national interest:

[8] J. V. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism* (Moscow, 1947), p. 466.

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> Some German politicians say that the USSR has now taken an orientation towards France and Poland; that from an opponent of the Versailles Treaty it has become a supporter of that treaty, and that this change is to be explained by the establishment of the fascist regime in Germany. That is not true. . . . We never had any orientation towards Germany nor have we any orientation towards Poland and France. Our orientation in the past and our orientation at the present time is towards the USSR, and towards the USSR alone. And if the interests of the USSR demand rapprochement with one country or another . . . we take this step without hesitation.

The underlying significance of the Franco-Soviet alliance, based upon reciprocal opportunism, turned out to be not so much that Moscow had aligned herself with the status quo powers in Europe, but rather that Stalin had decided that Soviet interests could be served no longer by remaining outside the European balance-of-power, but by becoming an active participant in the balance of power. As the Soviet perception and definition of immediate enemies changed, Soviet alignments were correspondingly shifted. This strategy guided Stalin when he was abandoned by France at Munich, and made him ready to ally himself again with the forces of German revisionism in order to divert their energies against his erstwhile status quo partners. In his address to the eighteenth party congress on 10 March 1939, Stalin, in dissecting the motives of Britain and France after Munich, gave a pointed indication of the motives behind the startling reversal of Soviet policy which was to follow five months later with the conclusion of the German-Soviet Pact:

> England and France . . . have taken up . . . the policy of . . . conniving at aggression, giving free reign to . . . an eagerness, a desire . . . not to hinder Japan, say, from embroiling herself in a war . . . with the Soviet Union; not to hinder Germany . . . from embroiling herself in a war with the Soviet Union; to allow all the belligerents to sink deeply into the mire of war, to encourage them surreptitiously in this; to allow them to weaken and exhaust one another; and then, when they have become weak enough, to appear on the scene with fresh strength, to appear, of course, 'in the interests of peace', and to dictate conditions to the enfeebled belligerents. Cheap and easy.[9]

When, in the same speech, he accused Britain and France of attempting 'to incense the Soviet Union against Germany, to poison the atmosphere, and to provoke a conflict with Germany without any visible grounds', he threw a broad hint to Germany that Moscow was not averse to an arrangement which might prove mutually beneficial. 'It can now be seen', Molotov reported after the Pact was signed, 'that on the whole Germany correctly understood these statements of Stalin and drew practical conclusions from them'. Molotov's justification of

[9] Ibid. p. 602.

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the Pact is an almost classic formulation of the motives underlying Soviet foreign policy:

> France and Great Britain . . . had shown that the conclusion of a pact of mutual assistance could not be expected, [and] we could not but explore together possibilities of ensuring peace and eliminating the danger of war between Germany and the USSR. If the British and French governments refused to reckon with this that is their affair. It is our duty to think of the interests of the Soviet people, the interests of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. All the more since we are convinced that the interests of the USSR coincide with the fundamental interests of the peoples of all countries. . . . Is it really difficult for these gentlemen to understand the purpose of the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact, on the strength of which the USSR is not obligated to involve itself in war either on the side of Great Britain against Germany or on the side of Germany against Britain? Is it really difficult to understand that the USSR is pursuing and will continue to pursue its own independent policy, based on the interests of the peoples of the USSR and only their interests? [10]

The identical principle governed Soviet participation in the Grand Coalition during the second world war, although Stalin at first expected the Western powers to stand aside to watch the two totalitarian giants engage in a battle of mutual annihilation. It should have come as no surprise then that after the war Moscow's wartime allies were suddenly transformed into 'immediate' enemies, and the Stalinist two-camp image of the world was resurrected with renewed conviction. But now the Soviet Union was moving from a position of power and not weakness, and the identical principle yielded not only diplomatic gains but ideological ones as well, as Soviet capabilities were brought into closer alignment with Soviet intentions. A system of vassal communist states was established in eastern Europe, while in the Far East a communist regime was installed in North Korea and opportunities were created for the assumption of power by Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Communist Party, although the rapidity and extent of Mao's victory may have surprised Stalin and was not entirely in harmony with Soviet interests.

Stalin's post-war policy assumed an inevitable conflict with the West, mobilised by the United States. The organisation of the Cominform and the forced unity of the communist orbit, the expulsion of Tito from the communist fraternity, the extraction of public statements of loyalty from communist leaders in all countries, the urgency with which Stalin sought to eliminate all possible power vacuums between the two blocs along the periphery of the communist world were all preparatory measures based on the false assumption that Washington was preparing the final Armageddon. At the founding convention of the Cominform,

[10] Text of Molotov's speech in *Strategy and Tactics of World Communism* (Washington, D.C., GPO, 1948), p. 160.

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Zhdanov gave an authoritative Soviet interpretation of the emerging bi-polarisation of power:

> The fundamental changes caused by the war on the international scene and in the position of individual countries have entirely changed the political landscape of the world. A new alignment of political forces has arisen. The more the war recedes into the past, the more distinct become two major trends in post-war international policy, corresponding to the division of the political forces operating on the international arena into two major camps; the imperialist and anti-democratic camp, on the one hand, and the anti-imperialist and democratic camp, on the other. The principal driving force of the imperialist camp is the USA. . . . The cardinal purpose of the imperialist camp is to strengthen imperialism, to hatch a new imperialist war, to combat socialism.[11]

Based on this grim image of imminent conflict, Soviet foreign policy became increasingly bellicose, which naturally provoked the belief in the West that the Soviet Union was itself preparing to overrun western Europe and all of Asia. Friction along the entire periphery dividing the two worlds was frequent and finally erupted in the Korean War, when Stalin sanctioned the move into South Korea on the assumption that it had become a vacuum between the two blocs. This accelerated defensive preparations in the West, and Stalin's policies, by predicting the increasing hostility of the West, actually ensured its materialisation.

During the Korean War and just before the nineteenth party congress in 1952, a debate had apparently taken place in the Politburo concerning the validity of the expectation of imminent war between the two camps. Two essentially divergent views were discussed by Stalin in his *Economic Problems of Socialism:* (1) That wars between capitalist countries had ceased to be inevitable and hence war between the two camps imminent, the view then current; and (2) that wars between capitalist states remained inevitable, but that war between the two camps was unlikely. Although the first view was the basis of Soviet post-war policy, Stalin ascribed it to 'mistaken comrades', and elevated the second to doctrinal significance:

> Some comrades hold that, owing to the development of new international conditions since the second world war, wars between the capitalist countries have ceased to be inevitable. They consider . . . that the USA has brought the other capitalist countries sufficiently under its sway to be able to prevent them going to war among themselves and . . . that the foremost capitalist minds have been sufficiently taught by the two world wars . . . not to involve the capitalist countries in war with one another again. . . . It is said that the contradictions between capitalism and socialism are stronger than the contradictions among the capitalist countries. Theoretically, of course, that is true. It is not only true now, today; it was true before the second world war. . . . Yet the second world

[11] *Strategy and Tactics*, p. 216.

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> war began not as a war with the USSR, but as a war between capitalist countries. Why? . . . because war with the USSR, as a socialist land, is more dangerous to capitalism than war between capitalist countries; for whereas war between capitalist countries puts in question only the supremacy of certain capitalist countries over others, war with the USSR must certainly put in question the existence of capitalism itself. . . . It is said that Lenin's thesis that imperialism inevitably generates war must now be regarded as obsolete. . . . To eliminate the inevitability of war, it is necessary to abolish imperialism.[12]

Stalin's only modification of the two-camp image was thus to concede that imminent war between the two blocs was no longer inevitable, but would first be preceded by a series of inevitable wars among the capitalist powers themselves.

IF it was Stalin who transformed the Soviet Union into a great power, it was under Khrushchev that Soviet Russia was transformed into a global power, directly challenging the United States for paramountcy and unilaterally claiming the right to intervene in any part of the world to assert an interest and influence developments. Stalin pursued essentially a cautious continental policy, oriented towards the communisation, first of the Soviet periphery and then of the new geographical periphery of the expanded communist bloc, relying on direct physical contiguity and the concentrically radiating expansion of communism from the Soviet base. The experience of the Hungarian Soviet Republic and other geographically isolated attempts to establish communist regimes after the 1914–18 war convinced Stalin that the capitalist world would never tolerate an isolated communist state in its midst; it would be crushed through internal subversion or direct assault.

Stalin was loath to overcommit the Soviet Union militarily, politically, or ideologically, and was reluctant to burden himself with obligations which he could not or preferred not to fulfil. This may explain his refusal to assume a legal obligation to defend Albania, which after 1948 was separated from the rest of the communist bloc by Yugoslavia's defection and hence was exposed to attack or subversion. Only with the creation of the Warsaw Pact in 1955 did Albania come under formal Soviet military and political protection. Similarly, Stalin abjured any legal commitments to North Korea and North Vietnam, both of which were parts of divided states and hence susceptible to involvement. It was apparently Stalin's design that as the communist periphery was gradually expanded outward from the centre, all communist states would be territorially adjacent to at least one other communist state. In the meantime, communist parties in non-contiguous countries would be supported and encouraged until the movement of the communist periphery to their borders created the possibility of their transformation into communist states.

[12] J. V. Stalin, *Economic Problems of Socialism* (New York, 1952), pp. 27–30.

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Khrushchev, on the other hand, broke out of the shell in which Soviet diplomacy had been encapsulated and embarked upon a bold global strategy of reaching out over oceans and continents in search not only of possible recruits to the communist bloc but of diplomatic client states as well in any part of the world. Whereas Stalin divided the world into two hostile camps and worked largely through local communist parties, Khrushchev carved a generous 'zone of peace' out of the capitalist camp as the immediate object of Soviet diplomacy. Consisting largely of underdeveloped, newly emancipated countries, strongly influenced by the Leninist theory of imperialism and predisposed to socialism of various national hues, the countries in the 'zone of peace' were perceived by Khrushchev as intrinsically anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, and hence anti-western, rather than as bogus appendages of the capitalist camp.

Khrushchev's global strategy, pursued in the wake of Soviet space spectaculars which he tried to transform into military power, was designed to breach the non-communist world at its vulnerable points all along the 'zone of peace'—in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Africa, and even Latin America. In the process, Soviet foreign policy was largely, but not entirely, de-ideologised, since the maximisation of possible diplomatic gains in the non-communist world dictated a minimisation and dilution of the ideological content of Soviet foreign policy. Ultimately this was self-defeating, although advantageous momentarily, since it entailed the abandonment of certain foreign policy strategies associated with Moscow for decades. It meant, in some instances, sacrificing the future of local communist parties in return for diplomatic gains in the third world; it also meant the diversion of scarce resources from internal development and allied communist countries to seduce the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa with economic bribes; it meant the assumption of new risks, costs, and burdens in areas far removed from the centres of communist power and vulnerable to American sea and air power. For a time Khrushchev capitalised on the alleged 'missile gap' to unfurl a protective nuclear-missile umbrella over the three continents of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, in the mistaken conviction that the United States could be deterred or dissuaded from resisting Soviet policy or local shifts of power promoted or encouraged by the Soviet Union.

While Khrushchev transformed the Soviet Union into a global power, he did it at the expense of weakening Soviet control in its own sphere, alienating Moscow's strongest ally, China, overcommitting the power and resources of the Soviet Union, and increasing the danger of thermonuclear war by his persistent prodding and probing of weak spots in the western world and forcing the United States into a series of confrontations, in the hope that this would result in the settlement of outstanding issues on Soviet terms and force the United States to withdraw from exposed positions. The Suez crisis of 1956, the Middle

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East crisis of 1958, the spasmodic Berlin crisis of 1958–61, and finally the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 were either manifestations or consequences of Soviet risk-taking in foreign policy in pursuit of substantial diplomatic gains.

It was also Khrushchev's fate to preside over the breakdown of the Sino-Soviet alliance, the disintegration of the Soviet bloc, and the dissolution of the world communist movement into captious states and fractious parties, unable to reconstruct a new consensus.

By denouncing Stalin, Khrushchev simultaneously, but unwittingly, shattered the foundations of Soviet ideological hegemony—the myths of Soviet moral superiority and doctrinal infallibility on which rested the Soviet claim to priority on the political loyalty of all communists and communist parties, and on the resources of communist states. By demolishing the 'cult of Stalin', Khrushchev inadvertently unleashed tremendous convulsive reactions in eastern Europe and provoked the wrath of the Chinese leadership; the virtual dissolution of the Soviet bloc and the Sino-Soviet conflict followed within a few years.

While the condemnation of the Stalin cult resulted in profound changes in Soviet relations with communist states and parties, it was Khrushchev's repudiation of certain specific doctrinal formulations associated with Stalin (and Lenin in some instances) which was to have profound consequences for Soviet foreign policy. By renouncing the Leninist-Stalinist thesis on the 'fatal inevitability of wars', Khrushchev jettisoned the suicidal implications of a formula whose grotesque self-fulfilling properties inspired terror in friend and foe alike, since the inevitability of war between East and West in the thermonuclear age promised not the inevitable victory of world communism but the inevitability of coextinction. By dismantling the Stalinist two-camp image and interposing a broad 'zone of peace' between the capitalist and communist worlds, Khrushchev not only introduced a convenient buffer between two contending giants but also freed Soviet diplomacy from the dogmatic restraints of the Stalinist dictum that all non-communist states were by definition part of the capitalist camp and hence to be treated as enemies rather than potential friends or allies. By renouncing the doctrine of 'capitalist encirclement', Khrushchev not only demolished the main ideological prop justifying the preservation of the apparatus of terror at home but also dispelled the psychological atmosphere of a Soviet state besieged on all sides by powerful enemies intent upon its annihilation. The renunciation of this doctrine enabled the Soviet Union to adopt a normal diplomatic posture although it served simultaneously to dilute its ideological content. Khrushchev thus sought to free the Soviet Union from its psychological self-encirclement so that it might, in turn, forge an encirclement of the remaining bastions of world capitalism, whose territorial and demographic dimensions had been substantially diminished by the loss of the 'zone of peace'.

Khrushchev's repudiation of another Stalinist concept, the doctrine of

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the progressive 'intensification of the class struggle' as the final victory of communism drew nearer, also had important implications for Soviet foreign policy. Extrapolated onto the world scene, this doctrine dictated the progressive aggravation of relations between the two camps and the exacerbation of international tensions generally. Its renunciation enabled Khrushchev to de-dogmatise Soviet diplomacy, redefine 'peaceful coexistence', and elevate it to doctrinal significance as something approximating a policy norm of Soviet foreign policy rather than an objective description of an unwanted equilibrium. The substantive meaning of peaceful coexistence, however, remains indeterminate and this absence of precision probably reflects disagreement among the Soviet leaders as to its precise contemporary ideological significance. What is clear is that the Stalinist concept of peaceful coexistence has been disavowed, and while it may not accord in all particulars to the Chinese charge that the new Soviet concept is indistinguishable from a rationalised acceptance of the international status quo, in some respects Soviet behaviour corresponds to the Chinese accusations.

KHRUSHCHEV'S global strategies were marked by serious contradictions, ambivalent goals, blatant opportunism, inept execution, and frequent adventurist excursions bordering on the irrational. For over a decade he alternated threats and blandishments, militancy and diffidence, responsible behaviour and irresponsibility, decorum and outrageous personal conduct. This ambivalence, while apparent in Khrushchev's personal idiosyncrasies, actually reflected the increasing difficulty of choosing between the Soviet Union's role as a responsible global power, dictated by the objective conditions of its industrial and technological maturation, and its role as an agency of messianic revolution.

Increasingly, Soviet ideological responsibilities to its communist allies and the world communist movement come into conflict with its responsibilities and interests as the second most powerful state in the international community. As a global power with proclaimed rights and responsibilities all over the world based upon its objective capabilities rather than upon the moral force of its ideology, to behave as the centre of a messianic movement would automatically limit the influence of the Soviet Union in areas where Soviet ideology is unwelcome. It should be noted, however, that at many points the role of the Soviet Union in the world communist system merges harmoniously with its self-assumed role in the general international system, particularly in its support of revolutionary movements and regimes in underdeveloped areas; occasionally they also collide, as the relations between the Soviet Union and radical nationalist regimes in Egpyt, Indonesia, Guinea, Algeria, and elsewhere have demonstrated.

This dual role calls for both conflict and cooperation with the United States; conflict as the residuary leader of the communist move-

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ment ostensibly still seeking to universalise itself, and cooperation as a partner-rival in the general international scene, where it seeks to relax international tensions. This cooperation not only gives greater physical security but also enables greater attention to be given to domestic needs. On the other hand, it involves the possible sacrifice of the interests of some of its allies (China, Cuba, North Vietnam), and the postponement or abandonment of some of its diplomatic and ideological objectives in foreign policy.

To minimise these conflicts, Soviet leaders have devised surrogates for the obligations to the world communist movement which they have deferred or renounced. They are providing greater material assistance to communist countries, are allowing, tolerating, or acquiescing in the assertion of greater autonomy in external and internal affairs on the parts of its east European allies, and in the underdeveloped countries they are supporting a variety of revolutionary-nationalist regimes and movements, frequently to the detriment of local communist parties, who are left to their own devices. This has created a gap, that the Chinese are trying to exploit, between the Soviet-supported nationalist regimes and the more radical guerrilla communists in many underdeveloped countries. As a global power the Soviet Union seeks client states of all political hues; as the residuary centre of a revolutionary movement, it welcomes ideological adherents. In an effort to merge these two objectives, Moscow hopes to attract the radical nationalist regimes into the Soviet diplomatic orbit and then guide their 'ethnic' brands of socialism in a Soviet direction through the conversion from above of radical nationalist regimes into communist regimes.

The emergence of the Soviet Union as a thermonuclear-missile power with global interests and responsibilities transcending ideological allegiances and rivalries, the resurgence of national autonomy in the communist system, the appearance of China as a national threat to Russia and ideological rival to the Soviet Union, and the fear of thermonuclear annihilation have combined to give the Soviet Union a greater interest in maintaining the status quo that in attempting to alter it in its favour by pursuing high-risk policies, whether ideologically inspired or not. There is a certain pathos and more than a grain of truth in the Chinese charge that the fear of thermonuclear annihilation, given the ingrained Bolshevik instinct for survival first implanted by Lenin at Brest-Litovsk in 1918, has become the principal animating force of the Soviet leadership:

> The Soviet leaders seek only to preserve themselves and would let other people sink or swim. They have repeatedly said that so long as they themselves survive and develop, the people of the world will be saved. The fact is they are selling out the fundamental interests of the people of the world in order to seek their own momentary ease.[13]

[13] Chinese statement of 15 August 1963, *Peking Review*, 16 August 1963.

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The avoidance of thermonuclear war, which was established by Khrushchev as the highest priority item in Soviet foreign policy, thus continues to have top priority under his successors, and this almost automatically impels the Soviet Union to minimise its confrontations with the United States. The recent Middle East crisis was a striking illustration of this.

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THE ADMINISTRATIVE INTELLIGENTSIA

Alf Edeen

MANY aspects of Soviet society have been seriously and thoroughly investigated and analysed in the West. One important sector seems, however, to have been somewhat neglected in the overall assessment of Soviet achievements and strength, namely, the performance of the Soviet administrative system and personnel, and particularly its capacity to cope with the growing diversification and complexity of a modern industrialised society. This is rather strange, because there is no lack of interesting material. On the contrary, in the Soviet press we read daily about appalling instances of mismanagement and deficiencies —often making the Soviet administration a laughing stock in both the West and the East. We usually leave it at that—adding perhaps that they will muddle through somehow or that similar instances could be found in any country.

The administrative problem is the more serious and vital in the Soviet Union as almost every social activity is centrally directed and controlled by an elaborate system of administrative organs and agencies. Among western observers the level of efficiency is generally rated very low—with the exception perhaps of military matters and defence-related activities. Even a cursory reading of the Soviet professional reviews indicates that Soviet political scientists are of the same opinion, though the ' system ' in itself, of course, is ' best '. A most illuminating example is to be found in an article published in 1965 in *Sovetskoe Gosudarstvo i Pravo:* ' The practical organisation of the execution of decisions is still the weakest link in the work of the government administration '. This is certainly a surprising statement, since to get things executed seems to be the very point of having an administrative body at all.

The problem of administrative efficiency is not a new one—it can be traced far back in Russian history. But all the evidence suggests that it is becoming more and more difficult and complex in the country's new industrial setting, and certainly has a bearing on the Soviet capacity for further overall expansion. To understand the nature of the problem today it is useful to recall some background factors which are particularly relevant to a discussion of the notorious Russian administrative mess.

Development under communist rule provides many important lessons, particularly concerning the effects of forced and rapid social change. The new rulers were probably serious when at the start they thought it would be easy to do away with the old Tsarist establishment and social system. They also appear to have believed that administration was a

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simple job, to be carried out in the not too distant future by a comparatively small staff of administrative personnel, most of them unpaid volunteers. But despite their ambitious goals and the repressive means adopted in the attempt to attain them, they had to yield to the deeply rooted social and psychological forces of an old agrarian society, governed for centuries by a centralised and swollen bureaucracy.

Many solid reasons can be put forward to show why the communists had to accept both a centralised governmental system and a large staff of administrators in order to build up the new society. The mere size, the diversified geographical and ethnic structure of the country, not to mention external dangers, made some sort of centralised power essential, as the practical experience of centuries had shown. The main instruments to enforce policies were traditionally the military and the police—bodies which by their very nature require centralised command. Moreover, the lack of strategic mobility forced the central government to keep strong standing forces in remote areas. It was vital for the existence of the whole system that the central government should be able to rely upon and enforce its power through these channels. The civilian local authorities played at best a subsidiary role, and the inadequacy of their personnel, both in number and training, was notorious. These are familiar features of the scene even today—the government system, the status of the local administration, the logistics problem, and the need for large standing forces more particularly on the periphery, and an omnipresent police force for internal security. But there are differences too. One completely new feature, and the most prominent, is the party machine—the supreme channel of command running parallel from top to bottom with the already existing administrations as an extra control of the controls. This important innovation has created a specific *modus operandi* in the Soviet administrative machinery and has given rise to a multitude of new institutional problems and ambiguities.

The heritage from the Tsars is but one factor explaining the propensity to centralisation and bureaucratisation in Soviet society. The communists have themselves made an ample contribution, above all at the ideological level. It is true that the idea of government ownership and active state interference in domestic affairs has a long tradition in Russia. But the socialist or communist basic idea was that the state should control *all* sectors of the society. This was and is looked upon as a *sine qua non* for the successful construction of a new society and a new administrative system. Thus, the communists enthusiastically supported the centralist forces inherent in the old Russian society.

Even more important in this development was the industrialisation drive to achieve in the shortest possible time political, military, and economic independence. Industrialisation in any country means a radical reallocation of manpower and brings with it especially a sharp increase in the number of administrators, directors, managers, engineers, statisticians, planners, bookkeepers, clerks, and other office personnel.

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Even before the industrialisation started there was a weighty administrative apparatus, composed of the inherited impressive Tsarist government machinery and of the many new administrative organs required by socialisation. Owing to the traditional lack of reliable statistics it is difficult to make an exact estimate of what industrialisation really meant in employment of new civilian personnel in industry, agriculture, building, trade, banking, and social services. What figures there are suggest a fivefold or sixfold increase within a decade or two.

THIS rapid expansion of administrative personnel created many problems for the leadership—the problem of their social origin, their education, training, social attitudes, the question of wages versus salaries, differentiation between various categories of salaried personnel, etc. One serious dilemma was the choice between employees with the 'right' background and the 'wrong' background. The surprising fact is that many old *chinovniks* managed to stay in office. Professionally they were certainly the best that could be found in Russia at that time, but their value to the regime from a political and psychological point of view was doubtful indeed. Their attitudes and values were bound to have a strong impact on the new inexperienced civil servants of worker and peasant origin. It is admittedly difficult to pinpoint this assertion, but the fact remains: no matter whether you read a pre-revolutionary or post-revolutionary paper—including the most recent—the complaints are invariably the same: inefficiency, red tape, bullying, indifference, not to mention embezzlement and fraud. The artificial and ideological character of the regulations governing wholesale trade makes it almost impossible for honest administrators to act efficiently, and the necessary job is left to so-called *tolkachi*, often very useful agents but of rather dubious character. This is another case in which old Tsarist habits are reinforced by the communist heritage.

These tendencies are bad enough. But the rapid and sharp increase in the number of functionaries in the military and civilian sectors automatically created a fundamental change in the entire social system and its prevailing values. At first almost imperceptibly, a process of social stratification opened a widening gap in economic, social, and cultural status both *between* different social groups and *within* each particular social group. But it is worth mentioning that the tendency to social stratification was apparent much earlier. The hard fact was that the regime from the very beginning of its existence was involved in warfare. It had to build up a military organisation. And it is unavoidable—no matter what the ideology—to have commanders of larger or smaller units, which in its turn means a differentiation in rank and for practical reasons in titles and uniforms for different services, reflected in an elaborate system of marks and insignia. Clearly, what happened in the armed forces had a pronounced psychological impact on the entire social and administrative framework of the Soviet Union, as, indeed, elsewhere in the world. A corresponding development was soon found

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natural in the foreign service—yet another sign of greater Soviet stability and 'respectability'. This process of greater visible social stratification was given a further stimulus during the second world war, particularly, of course, in the armed forces and the police, and reached its peak in the later forties, when civil servants even in many economic departments not only were classified in a very detailed and precise ranking order, which was the general rule, but also got special uniforms for each branch.

In his mania for secrecy and in his constant resort to administrative reshuffles and reforms, Stalin followed the Russian tradition. It is too easy and superficial to regard these reorganising attempts as no more than manoeuvres on the part of a dictator to stay on top, though of course the element of 'power struggle' was often involved. But at bottom these frequent changes reflected serious maladjustments, imbalances in the whole society and especially in the structure of the administrative system. There was always an obvious and rational objective in these different moves, an effort to deal with equally obvious and acute troubles.

TURNING to more recent times—the Khrushchev era—a most remarkable increase in the number of sudden, far-reaching reforms is to be noted. This was certainly not accidental. The abruptness, the dashing to and fro, and the general clamour can be attributed to Khrushchev's personality. But in this period the Soviet Union reached a very critical stage of development; it was making the transition from an agrarian society into a complex, modern industrial society. The planning of the economy—one of the central tasks of the administration—had formerly been comparatively easy. It had centred on the problem of constructing heavy industrial plants—almost anything was an improvement on the earlier state of affairs. With industrial progress and the end of post-war reconstruction, conditions changed. The problem now was to make the right choice between a variety of possible courses: alternative economic policies—high growth rate, rearmament, better living conditions, foreign aid—optimal product mix, investment in new industries such as chemicals, and, finally, concessions to the maltreated ordinary consumer, whose non-planned preferences introduced some confusion into 'scientific planning'. The remedy was seen in decentralisation; in 1957 Khrushchev introduced his own new system for industry and agriculture.

The idea behind the reform was indeed reasonable. The rigid central command and control of the Stalin era, with its comparatively simple economy, was naturally seen as the main obstacle to economic progress in a society where the officially proclaimed goal was to catch up with and surpass the United States in the shortest possible time, while at the same time every increase in overall output not only put a heavy strain on the entire economy but, above all, required extremely

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careful resource allocation and a smooth operational system between and within all administrative levels down to the individual enterprise.

From the broad political point of view the decentralisation scheme implied an opening for regional and local initiative and ambitions, not unreasonable having regard to the increased number of educated and trained personnel. This was, of course, particularly important in the national minority areas, where the local national intelligentsia could at last see a chance to conduct a local policy not exclusively dictated from the central power in remote Moscow. Decentralisation also had the beneficial effect of easing overcrowding in Moscow by a forced exodus of ministers, directors, and managers to the newly established provincial *sovnarkhozes*. There was in this an element of political tactics, namely, to remove from the political centre the conservative hard core in the administration, who could be exploited by opponents of Khrushchev's radical plan.

Strategic considerations also played an important role, working strongly in favour of decentralisation. A highly centralised government machine located in one single area is extremely vulnerable to nuclear attack, and the entire command system could be knocked out by the first strike, with disastrous effects for the country's overall defence capacity. Though some decentralisation measures must have been embodied in defence planning, it is interesting to note that no visible administrative changes followed in the military sector. It would have been logical to appoint defence ministers in the Union republics, in accordance with the provision in their constitutions. This would also have been in line with the administration of the police system, or the foreign service, where some republics are allowed their own foreign ministers. The management of military affairs seems to be too delicate a matter, and the central power was not prepared to sanction any institutional new order that might eventually encourage military 'localism'.

The decentralisation plan was, however, not at all a success when put into effect. The basic weakness became apparent at the very start—the difficulty of reconciling the political-administrative with economic-administrative rationality. This is clearly shown by the size of the new regional areas. The country was divided into rather more than a hundred small *raions* without an adequate economic basis. The point was that these *raions* coincided with the *oblast* organisation, that is, the apparatus of the provincial first party secretary. An economic-administrative rational size would have meant a merger of several *oblasts*, leading to most intricate competence conflicts and, above all, to a substantial reduction of power for many provincial party bosses. In the spring of 1957 Khrushchev's position was very exposed, as we know. He could not risk adding to his troubles by challenging this influential party body, which constituted the largest single 'professional' group in the Central Committee and whose support was essential to

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Khrushchev's bid for supreme power. Thus from the beginning the rational basic concepts of the plan were distorted.

It has been argued that the plan did not lead to any decentralisation at all. But it all depends on which level of the administrative system is in question. In this complex system of relations a certain measure may be looked upon as a decentralisation of power at one particular level, but may represent increased supervision from above at another level. It seems clear that decentralisation was neither felt nor intended at factory level. On the contrary, pressure and interference from the *sovnarkhoz* were probably stronger and more direct than under the old system of ministerial control from distant Moscow. The point of the new system was rather to delegate some power to the regional bodies; that is, it was an attempt to alter the relations between these organs and the central authorities. And within a short time the predictions of some western observers and the warnings from the author of the scheme himself came true. The new regional leadership rapidly acquired a strong local bias—*mestnichestvo*—the technical term for promoting regional and local needs and ambitions at the expense of national interests. This localism became no doubt a serious problem, particularly in areas where political, national, and economic borders coincided. In Latvia, for instance, the chief economic planner even talked about 'exports' and 'imports' in business deals with other republics within the Union.

The central authorities reacted as might be expected: in the early sixties recentralisation measures were gradually introduced and after the removal of Khrushchev in 1964 the new leaders resolutely returned to the old ministerial system. This time they tried yet another variant to tackle the old trouble: to combine strong centralised planning and control with decentralisation at the factory level, particularly in the consumer industries, where some element of market economy is supposed to operate. Recentralisation was very likely also connected with other important internal and international developments, especially the vigorous rearmament in 1961–63. This national effort, which laid heavy new burdens on an already strained economy, was not to be delayed or hampered by regional or local obstruction. The ministerial system with its proved chains of command would guarantee the smooth running of the economy in accordance with supreme national interests. On the other hand, this development again poses the uneasy problem of a highly centralised administrative machine and the effects of modern weaponry.

Another most interesting example of Khrushchev's passion for reform was the change made in 1962, when he split the party cadres into 'industrialists' and 'agrarians'. This sudden and unexpected move seems also to have reflected the growing complexity of the Soviet structure, and particularly the need for specialists with professional knowledge even within the party, in place of the verbose, pushing, and bullying party official of the old type. And this too presents the

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dilemma of specialised professional knowledge versus the status of the party member in Soviet society.

The fact is that the earlier fairly clear distinction between party and government officials has become increasingly blurred. The modern party man of the younger generation has acquired higher education, mostly in engineering, in no way inferior to that of his opposite number in government service, and this educational fusion is further underlined by the fact that party officials serve alternately in party and government jobs, and in many cases are civil servants in central or local administration for considerable periods. This exchangeability has been on the increase lately.

A similar development is noticeable in the relations between the professionals and the politicians in the armed forces. Today the professional officer is expected to be able to perform the duties of the political officer and vice versa. This may seem strange and perhaps recall the amateurish experiments of earlier periods. But the statistics given in Soviet military journals show an increasing number of political officers with higher or middle military education, while professional officers are reported as holding the post of party secretary in the political organisations of the armed forces. How far this dilution of functions has proceeded and how successful the substitution is, it is hard to say.

In the civilian sector there was a problem of similar complexity which Khrushchev no doubt had in mind when he proposed the change —the endless troubles caused by direct party interference in daily administrative work. On paper the tasks and duties of the two parallel hierarchies are clearly defined. The administration's job is to administer; the party's job is to guide and supervise the activities of the administration and its personnel. At every administrative level the ultimate power *and* responsibility lies in the hands of the corresponding party organ. If something goes wrong, which it does very often, the party organ is in its own interest forced to intervene. The borderline between 'intervention' and *administrarovanie* is, of course, hazy, and more a matter of the inclinations and ambitions of the responsible party man.

Khrushchev's idea of the division of the party into 'industrial' and 'agrarian' could be interpreted as an attempt to resolve conflicts of competence and to accelerate a party-government integration in order to promote a more rational, efficient, and less personnel-absorbing administrative system. The controversial point was the potential danger to the party's position in society. The obvious risk was that an integration or fusion might lead to a 'withering away' of the party as the supreme and autonomous organisation, responsible for the development of the entire society. There was also the danger of clashes between industrial and agricultural 'fractions' within the party, representing strong vested interests.

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The party reform, like so many of Khrushchev's projects, was short-lived. It is hard to say whether his opponents regarded the bold and novel ideas it embodied as completely wrong and dangerous or just premature. But no one can deny that Khrushchev vigorously tackled both old and new ills in Soviet society. He may not have been very successful as reformer. But it is now up to his successors to present better ideas to meet the challenge of the new Russia. After the downfall of Khrushchev the party reform was immediately cancelled. This is a sort of reform, too. But by merely restoring the old order it leaves the old administrative problems untouched.

CENTRAL to the performance and efficiency of the administrative machine is the leadership's attitude towards the administrative intelligentsia. This covers the general atmosphere created by the leaders, and the social, economic, and cultural status of the officials. Stalin's traditional pragmatic approach has been mentioned. He organised a strict command system, which even in civilian departments had a definite touch of the military about it. He also oiled the machinery with a large dose of terror—to such an extent that at one time the entire system almost broke down. In certain circumstances a reign of terror may be effective, but certainly nor for very long, and not in a mature society. Almost immediately after Stalin's death his heirs started to introduce new methods. The more lenient attitude affected the whole of society, but the intelligentsia was most concerned. The keen awareness of the specific problems of the administrative class was shown by the measures which brought some elementary order into office hours, which earlier had been determined by the nocturnal working habits of the dictator.

Fear was certainly a constant element in Stalin's technique of rule. On the other hand, it was under him that the administrative intelligentsia acquired social and economic status. Under Khrushchev the threat of jail and prison camps was reduced. But his radical and egalitarian inclinations were combined with a deep, rather vulgar resentment towards officialdom and expertise. He himself posed as the common-sense representative of the ordinary people. Stalin was on the right track when he once contemptuously called Khrushchev a *narodnik*. Khrushchev's arrogant self-sufficiency often brought him into conflict with the economic experts, as in 1957, when he said that the Soviet Union could out-produce the USA in meat production 'in a couple of years'. His garrulity and dilettante approach to intricate problems at home and abroad, and his occasional crudity of manner, no doubt caused a lot of irritation among upper civil servants and educated people in general. These characteristics became quite dangerous when he presented himself as military strategist and intervened in matters of military organisation and defence.

Khrushchev's reforming activities were particularly annoying and

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disturbing for the administrative intelligentsia, civilian and military. A bureaucracy is by nature inclined towards routine, strict rules of procedure, stable organisation, and this is especially true of the Soviet type of administration. Khrushchev inclined in the opposite direction, and was constantly searching for new organisational arrangements and improved methods of management. Planning in a Soviet-type economy is a very complicated matter indeed, requiring at least a minimum of consistency and stability. His impulsive and frequent reshuffling of economic priorities must have driven Gosplan officials to despair. It is true that a huge and sluggish administration must have a leader with a strong will and initiative. But Khrushchev's excessive élan and arbitrary interference created a very unfavourable atmosphere for rational long-term planning and the smooth running of day-to-day administration.

The present leaders seem to have a quite different approach to the administrative intelligentsia. Both Brezhnev and Kosygin have higher professional education and long administrative experience. So far they have acted very cautiously in administrative matters and—after cancelling out Khrushchev's whims—seem anxious not to introduce disturbing innovations. Consequently the administrative machinery has regained stability and the administrators have recovered their authority and status. It was significant that Kosygin in his maiden speech to the managerial class made a special point of management's right to office cars. The same tendency is obvious in the new plans for increased production of consumer durables, including private cars. Figures on output and on wages and salaries indicate that the well-paid officials in government service are among the first to benefit from the expanded production of luxury items. Though conditions and resources differ, there is undoubtedly a Stalinist touch in the positive attitude of the present leaders towards the administrative intelligentsia.

In their turn, professional attitudes and technical expertise have made a strong imprint upon the political climate in the Soviet Union. There is now a notable absence of inspiring and visionary appeals; the conduct of the leadership seems efficient and rational, but at the same time colourless and unimaginative. This is perhaps a natural development and may well be suited to a more advanced stage of industrial evolution. But in view of the traditional inertia and indolence in the Russian state service, this carries with it the risk of stagnation, leading to negligence and the sending to and fro of papers, instructions, and reports. The delicate problem the present leaders have to tackle is to strike a nice balance between the bureaucracy's need for stability and consistency and society's growing need for innovation and new administrative techniques.

The degree of appreciation of the administrative intelligentsia may vary from one to the other, but, fundamentally, the Soviet leaders have always had an ambivalent attitude. This is not surprising. The

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increasing stratification, partly inevitable and partly deliberate, has in fact created a gap between hard social realities and the still vivid memory of earlier utopian or romantic views on the evolution of society. This contradiction explains both the psychological obstacles to a rational, scientific approach to managerial problems and the officially sponsored confusion on these matters. There is pride in the increased output of engineers and other specialists, but when these categories enter on their professional career in the state service, they feel uneasy about the social (and for that matter economic) effects of this process, and an attempt is made to conceal these continuous additions by way of artificial definition and classification devices. The political scientists indulge in endless and quite irrelevant discussions about categories in the 'productive' sphere, or 'directly connected with production', and categories which are said to be 'unproductive'.

TWO other questions of interest arise: first, the composition and training of the administrative intelligentsia; the second, strictly technical, is the provision of modern office machines. Again, the statistical material is sadly inadequate, but it does warrant a few general conclusions. Organisationally, the present set-up of the administrative intelligentsia is top-heavy; there are too many in the higher ranks of management, and too few in the lower. The following table gives the composition of the administrative personnel in the Ukraine in 1964:

Occupation	*As percentage of total*
Directors and deputies	25·6
Chief specialists and deputies	2·4
Engineers, etc., in administrative jobs	9·4
Engineer-economists, economists, planners	4·8
Bookkeepers and statisticians	30·5
Office personnel	6·6

These figures must be read with some caution. But top management is a comparatively distinct group and represents no less than about 30 per cent of the administrative personnel. The figure of 6–7 per cent for clerks and other office workers, including typists and stenographers, may be slightly underrated, because this group causes some 'ideological' uneasiness in general and is a headache for Soviet sociologists, who are at a loss where to place this diffuse and transitional category—in what 'class' or 'stratum' (*prosloika*). Still, this distribution is almost incredible and certainly creates one of the most serious bottlenecks in the Soviet administrative system. It leads automatically to extremely irrational ways of handling administrative duties and explains the continuous complaints about the misuse of qualified officials. These are up to their ears in all sorts of minor jobs and details, and are at the same time supposed to perform responsible duties.

Connected with these tendencies are the troubles created by crash programmes to mass produce certain types of 'status' specialists. The

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outstanding example is the impressive production of civil engineers (university level), which has caused a rather awkward imbalance between this category and the technicians (middle-school level). Since there is a considerable relative shortage of this latter group, the same story is repeated: many university engineers are placed in functions below their educational level and qualifications.

There is, secondly, the intricate problem of what type of professional training is required for different stages of the industrialisation process. The first generation of industrial leaders and managers consisted largely of self-made men—represented in Russia by the party official whose lack of education and expert knowledge was to some extent compensated by his capacity for leadership. At the second stage of a still comparatively unsophisticated economy, the need for expert technological knowledge is strongly felt. This explains the great emphasis on engineering and technical education in the Soviet administration as well as in the party machine. The rule is the engineer-boss in the factories and next to him the chief engineer. But as soon as this second generation of industrialists is in due course installed in office, industrialisation has reached a far more complex stage of evolution, and another generation and type of industrial manager is needed. Symptomatic of the present trend and the new requirements is the appointment of a chief economist in the factories on a par with the old chief engineer. This innovation has been stressed by Premier Kosygin, who has publicly complained of the shortage of personnel with economic training, and more particularly of the very low output rate of economists from universities and other higher professional schools. The problem of engineer versus economist in the administration is reflected in the table above, where the figure of the relative share of the economist group is improved by the inclusion of the hybrid 'engineer-economists'.

Office equipment is a particularly weak point in the Soviet administrative system. Much has been written lately in Russia about computer techniques as the grand solution for the administrative mess. Some enthusiasts seem to believe that it is only a short and easy step from the still widely used abacus to the refined electronic computer. This school of thought also predicts that within a couple of decades the whole adult population will have to be engaged in administrative jobs and planning, if the present outmoded system continues. Now the fact is that the production of computers in the Soviet Union is still very low, and all the evidence suggests that the relatively few data machines in use are largely 'consumed' by the military sector or in defence-related activities. There are, of course, exceptions: the surprisingly rapid and comprehensive publication of the results of the 1959 census must be credited to the extensive use of computers.

But quite apart from these obstacles, the real trouble here is that there are no computers with the capacity to swallow the mass of data

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from such a giant monster as the Soviet planning system. Thus, the computer offers no overall means of mastering Soviet administrative and planning complexities in the foreseeable future. The more serious problem today is rather the appalling lack of simple and ordinary office machines and means of communication—typewriters (even carbon paper), calculating machines, dictaphones, and telephones. These deficiencies tend to reinforce each other, and to set in motion a downward spiral of efficiency. The shortage of clerks and secretaries means that oral communication predominates over written, but since there are not enough telephones or other communication equipment, managers have either to devote a good deal of time to walking around the factory or office to get in touch with subordinate personnel, or to summon their staff to lengthy and numerous meetings. Whether the managers choose the first or the second method or both, they are not easily available for other people, who may be in urgent need of information or orders and who, consequently, in their turn have to spend hours passively in waiting-rooms. The Soviet leaders are, of course, aware of all this, but perhaps do not realise the real scope and importance of these very efficient obstacles to administrative efficiency, and how far Russia is lagging behind the West in this respect. And if they do, it may be that they find it impossible at the moment to allocate more hardware for administrative rationalisation.

THIS brief survey gives a rather gloomy picture of the present situation; nor do the prospects for the coming decades seem very bright either. The problems involved cannot be resolved overnight by some ingenious technical device. We have here to deal with deep-rooted, institutionalised factors and irrationalities, which the Soviet leaders will have to live with for a considerable time. An established bureaucratic machine seems to live its own life, and if it changes, it will do so grudgingly and according to its own inherent 'laws': it would rather change the people it deals with than be changed by them. Efforts to provide the administration with modern business equipment can certainly make things better and easier, but, basically, the question is one of changing people's attitudes. It is hardly possible to do this with people who have grown old in the old ways, and hopes must be set upon the coming generations, largely unaffected by the terror of the thirties and the horrors of the war.

There still remains the extremely complex and delicate problem of power relations in the administrative system—the party machine versus the state and local administration, the command system from central organs via regional and local organs down to individual enterprises in industry, agriculture, trade, etc. In spite of frequent and sometimes vigorous attempts to bring about a change in these relations, nothing like a modern, efficient, and smooth-running organisation is in sight. The leaders obviously understand the need for substantial reforms

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and particularly for a delegation of power to the lower administrative levels. But caution sets a limit; the greater autonomy now granted to enterprises could lead to polycentric tendencies at the base of the economy, with possible repercussions on central planning and might—in combination with other liberalising measures—even endanger the entire political command and control system.

The central difficulty is that these problems seem to be eternal in the sense that a decentralisation scheme can solve *some* problems and bottlenecks at *some* administrative levels, but tend at the same time to pose a threat to what is seen as a national interest. And, conversely, a centralised system can certainly safeguard the latter, but requires an extremely cumbersome management at the top, wastes local resources, and suppresses local initiative. So the whole system oscillates back and forth in slow motion; adjustments and readjustments are introduced, when one particular reform has caused too many and too serious troubles at one administrative level or another.

In a less advanced society these frequent shifts and reforms would perhaps do no harm. But the Soviet industrial and social structure is steadily growing more complex, and this makes the job of the planning authorities more and more difficult. An interesting and significant symptom is the new emphasis on economists rather than engineers: with perhaps the exception of completely new industries, the question now is not so much one of production as of the really sophisticated planning, coordination, integration, and timing of various economic and social activities.

The steady increase in the number of officials and of the personnel in service industries is a positive trend, because it will probably promote a higher rate of social mobility, counteracting the tendency of the intelligentsia to recruit exclusively from its own ranks. On the other hand, the relative share of workers and peasants will rapidly decrease; the Soviet Union is fast moving from its 'proletarian' social origin to a middle-class society, an evolution strongly reinforced by the official endorsement of typical middle-class social values and attitudes. These changes, both economic and social, and the accompanying administrative complexities, are a challenge to Soviet political scientists and most particularly sociologists. Are they well enough trained, and are they allowed to investigate freely delicate social questions and administrative practices, thus helping to resolve both present and future problems? The fact is that Soviet sociologists, like Soviet social scientists in general, work in an adverse intellectual climate, and seen to have very limited opportunity to influence the bureaucrats. It is true that sociological research has improved considerably during the last five to ten years, and has touched many sore points. So far, they have succeeded in producing embarrassing statistics and analyses which reveal the wide gap between the official propaganda and Soviet social realities. In fact, they are making a nuisance of themselves to the ruling circles and

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leading bureaucrats, who may set limits to further inquisitive investigations. Perhaps the increasing complexities of social engineering are outpacing the speed of intellectual liberation, and both the bureaucrats and the social scientists will lag behind the requirements of social and economic development.

Our Contributors

ABRAHAM ASCHER, Associate Professor of History at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, is working on a biography of Pavel Axelrod.

VERNON V. ASPATURIAN is Professor of Political Science at Pennsylvania State University.

ALF EDEEN, Member of the Directing Staff of the Royal Swedish National Defence College, is the author of *Rysslands Nya Medelklass.*

MATTHEW P. GALLAGHER lectures at the Institute for Sino-Soviet Studies at the George Washington University and is the author of *The Soviet History of World War II: Myths, Memories, and Realities.*

MICHAEL GLENNY'S translations, besides Bulgakov, include works by Dostoevsky, Babel, Lunacharsky, Zoshchenko, Bunin, and others. He is shortly returning to Oxford to do post-graduate research on Leonid Krasin.

WERNER KLATT, editor of *The Chinese Model* (1966), was for many years an economic adviser to British government departments. He is now completing a study of agrarian problems in developing countries.

GEORGE A. SCHOPFLIN is Research Assistant at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London.

SOLOMON SCHWARZ, author of *The Russian Revolution of 1905, Jews in the Soviet Union,* etc., and member of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party from early youth, contributed to and edited the Menshevik periodical *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* until it ceased publication.

JOHN R. THOMAS is a specialist on Soviet politico-military affairs at the Research Analysis Corporation, McLean, Virginia. He had extensive experience in the Soviet Union in the 1930s and in the post-war period.

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FIFTY YEARS OF THE SOVIET ARMED FORCES

Matthew Gallagher

THREE generations and a turbulent history separate the Soviet armed forces today from the ragged volunteers who, legend tells us, fought the first battles of the Soviet regime at Narva and Pskov some fifty years ago. No feature of Soviet society has changed more dramatically since the October revolution, and none with greater consequences for Soviet society and the world. It is not surprising that one looks in vain for simple explanations.

The history of the Soviet armed forces is above all the history of a political function—the history of the Soviet regime acting to defend and extend its power through the development and employment of military force. Throughout this history, the regime has been guided by its own needs and objectives, but also influenced by factors it could not fully control. The physical resources of the country, the world environment in which it has operated, the nature and strength of the forces that opposing states have arrayed against it, and the changes that have occurred in these factors and the relationships among them over periods of time have all played a role. Even the Soviet armed forces themselves have exerted pressures, begetting new threats from abroad by the threats they posed, playing politics internally on behalf of institutional self-interests, and complicating the ways in which military policy has been shaped.

In sum, there are many aspects to the problem of assessing the historical development of the Soviet armed forces. This essay is concerned with all of them in one way or another, but it is focused mainly on the political aspects, on the internal Soviet scene. It attempts to sketch the main developments that have affected Soviet military policy over the past fifty years, and to explore the question why they occurred, what effects they have had on the Soviet armed forces as an institution, what reciprocal effects the growth of the armed forces has had on Soviet policy and Soviet society generally, and finally how, in the light of all this, it is appropriate to evaluate the event that set everything in motion —the October revolution.

The Land and the Ideology

In beginning this account of a history that seems dominated by change, it may be useful to consider some of the factors that have exerted a persistent or recurrent influence on Soviet military policy over the years. Among these, the geopolitical factors must rank among the more important.

Like the tsarist regimes before it, the Soviet regime has found itself

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subject to conditions imposed by the physical character of the country and its location in the world. A large land area, fringed by subject and not always docile populations, ringed by powers with competing and sometimes hostile interests, largely unprotected by natural barriers, blessed by abundant economic resources, and cured by an economy that was unable to exploit them efficiently, has framed for the Soviet regime the choices available to policy.

Many features that have become characteristic of Soviet military policy and practice over the years can be traced to these conditions. The traditional bent of Soviet strategic thinking toward Europe, for example, the tendency to regard this area as the source of maximum danger and the most probable arena of future military actions, undoubtedly reflects not only the lessons of historical experience but the facts of the Soviet Union's geographical position. In the early years of the regime, this orientation generated visionary thoughts about the expansion of the revolution on 'Red Army bayonets', and in more recent years determined a military force structure which, despite the manifest growth of the transoceanic threat, is still dominated by the requirements of continental warfare. The absence of unhindered access to the seas, except in the Far East, has undoubtedly reinforced these tendencies by serving to reduce the options for alternative modes of exercising world power.

Even on the technical military level, the influence of factors determined by the nature of the territory to be defended and the resources available for its defence can be discerned. The recurrent stress in Soviet military writings on the importance of manoeuvre and mobility in war seems prompted in part by considerations relating to the extensive borders and open spaces of Russia. And it seems not an undue stretch of the imagination to suppose that the traditional Russian emphasis on the importance of 'mass' in warfare—whether in the form of troop formations as in the first world war, artillery concentrations as in the second, or the MRBM and IRBM forces aimed at Europe today—relates in part to a military experience in which the populous masses of Russia supplied the regime with its ultimate recourse in war.

Along with the land and the people, ideology must rank as one of the constant factors affecting Soviet military policy. It has not, however, been a 'guide to action', as Lenin once described it. Indeed, the classics of Marxism-Leninism are remarkably barren of the kinds of concrete ideas on military matters that might have served to sketch the blueprint of a future proletarian army. And the men who made the revolution were too preoccupied with the pressing contemporary problem of neutralising and destroying the army of the Provisional Government to give much thought to the kind of army they should put in its place. Experience rather than theory was the true mother of the ideas that went into the making of the Red Army.

But ideology has worked in other ways to affect the development

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of the Soviet armed forces. It has created an atmosphere in the country that has been favourable to the growth of military strength. Like a self-fulfilling prophecy, it has worked to bring about the tensions between the Soviet Union and the outside world that have served as the rationale and justification of Soviet military policies. It has also affected the relations between the regime and the army, sowing the seeds of suspicion in the minds of the Soviet leaders which over the course of time have led to a luxuriant proliferation of political controls over the military establishment. Much of the history of the Soviet armed forces concerns these controls and the deeper tensions they have both reflected and helped to sustain—tensions which have had the effect of placing the interests of the armed forces' military efficiency in a category somehow separate from and not always compatible with the interests of the regime. Finally, in ways which are difficult to measure, the ideology has almost certainly had some effect on the intangible qualities of the armed forces—the morale of its officers and the spirit of its men. The world view that the ideology projects is the only world view that the officers and men of the armed forces have. To a much greater extent than before the second world war, the people of Russia seem to have come to identify the interests of the regime with the interests of their country.

The Effects of History

While these constant factors have created the environment in which the Soviet armed forces have grown, the character of the armed forces as an institution in Soviet society owes much more to the effects of specific historical events and circumstances. The Civil War period and the years immediately following were particularly important in this respect. It was during these years that the first efforts were made to deal with problems that have remained central to Soviet military affairs ever since. One was the problem of adjusting the party's demand for political loyalty to the need for professional efficiency in its military instrument. The other was the problem of defining the doctrine that should guide the policies of the regime in the development of the armed forces.

The first problem was brought into relief by the circumstances of the Civil War (1918–20) and the measures taken to deal with them. At the time of the revolution, the bolsheviks had almost no armed forces worthy of the name. They seized power in Petrograd with the aid of troops that were essentially irregular in character. It was only under the pressure of emergent civil war in 1918 that they turned to the task of building an army capable of defending the regime against a serious military threat. The old slogans that had guided their policies when the main objectives had been to undermine the old army—the ideas that had found expression in such acts as the notorious Order No. 1 calling for elected committees to run the affairs of the army—gave way to the

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iron necessities of war. In these circumstances it was natural that the regime should turn to the only source of military experience available, the officers of the old Russian army.

During the next two years, some 50,000 of these military specialists, or *voyenspets*, as they were called, were enrolled in the Red Army.[1] Some of them, as for example Tukhachevsky—later to become a Marshal of the Soviet Union and one of the country's most influential military leaders—assumed positions of great responsibility. To a large extent, the fortunes of the country came to rest on the skills these men possessed. Yet, from the standpoint of the regime, they lacked the most essential qualification for the task thus thrust upon them, namely, identification with the 'class' in whose name the war was being fought.

This was the dilemma that gave rise to the commissar system. To ensure the loyalty of the military specialists, the regime assigned party men to oversee their activities. In effect, a system of dual command was created, and in some cases—as in the case of Commissar Stalin, political overlord in the South, and patron extraordinary of the 1st Cavalry Army—the roles became reversed, with the political member of the team becoming the more powerful. Given the circumstances of the time, however, the system worked well enough to enable the regime to exploit the talents of the military specialists without fatal damage either to the efficiency of the army or its own powers of control.

After the Civil War, the swollen Red Army of several millions that Trotsky had built began to be disbanded, the military specialists began to be thinned out, and the aspect of the command staff, now leavened by the 'Red Commanders' who had been trained during the war, began to take on a more proletarian hue. Yet the institution of military commissars persisted. Indeed, as the future development of the Soviet military establishment showed, it had acquired remarkable powers of self-perpetuation.

In one form or another, the system of dual control has remained a permanent feature of the Soviet armed forces. Fierce battles have been fought over the question what the form should be, whether the administration of the armed forces should be tailored primarily to the requirements of military efficiency or to the goal of ensuring political loyalty. From the mid-1920s to the mid-1930s a mixed system was applied: commanders of tried loyalty were given 'one-man command', those deemed less reliable were kept in the tandem arrangement. In 1934–35, when Stalin's political power seemed to have waned and Tukhachevsky's influence was strong, the status of the officer corps was elevated, traditional ranks were re-established, and officers were granted immunity from arrest by civilian courts.[2] Then came the purges, and the pendulum swung back to political control. The war changed everything once again. Since the war further changes have occurred, but

[1] John Erickson, *The Soviet High Command* (London, 1962), p. 33.
[2] Ibid., Chap. 12, passim.

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within a narrower range of extremes, Stalin's cold purge of the war heroes after 1945 representing one, and Zhukov's professionalisation of the Ministry of Defence during the mid-1950s representing the other. Generally speaking, a reasonably peaceful coexistence now seems to prevail, with officers exercising unquestioned 'one-man command', but advised at the higher levels by military councils that include a political member, and assisted at the lower levels by 'deputy commanders for political affairs'.

The other problem of great consequence, first tackled after the Civil War, was the problem of military doctrine. It involved many issues: what the nature of a future war might be, whether the Red Army might be called upon to participate in the revolutionary struggles in Europe that everyone thought to be just beyond the horizon, whether the army should be organised on professional principles as a 'cadre, regular army', or whether it should hew more to the revolutionary ideal of a partisan-type militia, and whether the experiences of the Civil War provided a model for a new proletarian way of waging war, or whether the classic principles of the military art retained value for the future. These issues wound in intricate confusion through the debates and polemics of the early 1920s that punctuated the first efforts of the Soviet political and military leaders to decide what the future of the armed forces should be.

There was no consistent pattern governing the line-up of the sides in these debates; players took sides depending upon the issue debated and the bearing the issue might have on other issues. On the question of a regular versus a militia organisation, for example, Trotsky, the early champion of a regular army, and the consistent patron of military professionalism—but concerned during the early 1920s with the economic problems of the NEP—came down strongly on the side of the militia, the cheaper alternative. On the question of military operational principles, however, he came down on the side of the military classics, ridiculing the idea of 'proletarian' military doctrine advanced by the 'regular army' man, Frunze. On the question of whether the Red Army should play a role in future revolutions in Europe, Trotsky, the revolutionist, was the scornful opponent, and Tukhachevsky, the military professional, the enthusiastic advocate.[3]

The lasting significance of these debates lay not so much in the specifics of the issues debated, since politics (specifically, the politics of Stalin) cast the deciding vote in the end, but in the ideal they first formulated—the ideal of a body of concepts that should guide the policies of the state in the development of the armed forces. It was an audacious ideal, since it implied the complete rationalisation of all the activities of the country connected with the preparation of the armed

[3] A valuable collection of early Soviet writings on military doctrine is now available in a volume entitled *Voprosy strategii i operativnogo iskusstva v sovetskikh voennykh trudakh (1917–1940)*, published by the Soviet Ministry of Defence in 1965, under the general editorship of Marshal Zakharov.

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forces for war. It was also a dangerous ideal, since it implied that professional military opinion had a part to play in what was essentially a political function. It is not surprising that little more was heard of Soviet military doctrine after Stalin came to power, and that in the years that followed the term itself virtually disappeared from the Soviet military lexicon.

Now the term has come back. Since 1961, when Marshal Malinovsky first revealed its renewed currency, we have heard much about Soviet military doctrine. It refers, we are told, to the system of views that have been developed to guide the state in the development of the armed forces in the new conditions that have been imposed by the nuclear-missile age. It seems appropriate that the Soviet military leaders should revive the concept of a military doctrine at a time when, like their predecessors of the 1920s, they stand at the threshold of a new military era. And it is not surprising that the concept still apparently carries with it some of the dangerous implications that Stalin seemed to recognise. At least there have been indications that questions still arise as to who develops the views that guide the policy of the state—the military or the party.[4]

A survey of the historical developments that have left an impress on the Soviet armed forces would be incomplete without mention of such consequential events as the purges of the 1930s, the second world war, and the death of Stalin. The lasting effects of all these events lie to a greater or lesser extent in the sphere of military-political relations, in particular in the emotional and psychological ingredients they have added to the military attitudes affecting these relations. The purges of 1937–38 cut down a large part of the commanding staff of the Red Army, deprived the country of its most able military leaders on the eve of war, and left a swathe of psychological damage among the survivors that cannot be estimated. If there had been any chance that the mutual suspicions that had marked the relations between the party and the army might have abated with the passage of time, these chances were destroyed for at least another generation by the holocaust of the purges. The war left psychological effects of another kind. It gave the Soviet officer corps that sense of pride and self-identity that Frunze had sought vainly to inspire a generation before. This is not to deny that the experiences of the war also engendered jealousies and factionalism among Soviet officers which Soviet political leaders, on occasion, have been able to exploit to advantage. But there is an important sense in which it can be said that the armed forces have presented a different face to the regime since the war, because they have been led by men who once shared responsibility for the destiny of the nation.

Finally, the death of Stalin. Its importance to the armed forces lay

[4] One example was a review of Sokolovsky's *Military Strategy* which appeared in *Voenny Vestnik* in January 1963. The reviewers criticised the authors of the volume for ascribing too large a role to military doctrine and strategy at the expense of 'politics'.

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also largely on the psychological level; there was less impact on the policy level, since the developments that were to dominate Soviet military policy in the years ahead had already been set in motion before Stalin died. But Stalin's death broke the shackles that had stultified Soviet military thinking, and opened the door to the important role in the formulation of military policy that the officers have played ever since.

The Bomb and the Missile

The modern age of the Soviet armed forces is dominated by the bomb and the missile, that is, by the implications of the revolution in military affairs brought about by nuclear and missile technology. Viewing the effects of this revolution from the standpoint of the impact it has had on the technical aspects of the armed forces, one is tempted to conclude that all links with the past have been broken, that Soviet military history has become irrelevant to an understanding of the armed forces today. But, from another angle, from the standpoint of the goals of Soviet military policy, and the role of the armed forces in Soviet social and political life, the effects appear much less dramatic. Indeed, the military-technical revolution appears to have reinforced, and given new impetus to, the trends established by history.

The Soviet Union entered the nuclear-missile age directly after the second world war. According to a recent Soviet analysis of the history of the Soviet armed forces, the chief characteristic of the period from the end of the war to 1954 was the effort to acquire and master the new technology, and the chief characteristic of the period from 1954 to the present was the effort to assimilate the new weapons into the armed forces and to develop the strategy and tactics appropriate to their use.[5] While, in actuality, the two processes did not fall so neatly into separate time compartments, the distinction between the two is valid, and serves as a useful framework for considering this stage in the history of the Soviet armed forces.

The two processes were, in fact, discrete in many ways, and they did develop according to different tempos in the Soviet Union. Both nuclear technology and missile development were pushed rapidly after the war. A nuclear reactor was in operation in 1947, the first atomic device tested in 1949, and the first air-dropped thermonuclear device exploded in 1953. Missile development kept pace: using the German V-2 as the basic model, Soviet scientists had tactical missiles in production by 1952, were ready to test medium-range missiles by 1955, and succeeded in firing the original model of an ICBM in 1957. The only limitations on this technological progress seemed to be those imposed by technology itself.[6]

It was a different matter with the assimilation of these technological

[5] Colonel I. Korotkov, 'O razvitii sovetskoy voennoy teorii v poslevoennye gody', *Voenno-istorichenskiy zhurnal*, No. 4, 1964, p. 39.

[6] Marshall D. Shulman, *Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraised* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), p. 198.

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developments into the armed forces and the adaptation of the armed forces to their use. Here the institutional weight of the military establishment, and the habits of a generation of military experience, raised the initial barriers. Judging from their speeches and writings during the 1950s, Soviet military leaders were at the outset conservative in their evaluation of the significance of the new weapons. There was a strong tendency to regard them as essentially only improvements over the old, as representing a better form of artillery. Indeed, authority over the development of missile weapons in the Ministry of Defence appears to have been assigned to the Main Artillery Directorate.[7] Soviet strategic vision seemed blind to the possibility that a future war might be fought elsewhere than in the European theatre and in ways essentially different from those used earlier. As a result, the adaptation of the armed forces to the conditions of the nuclear-missile age proceeded slowly.

The year 1960 was the great watershed in Soviet strategic thinking and in military policy generally. Khrushchev's speech of 14 January 1960, calling for a one-third cut in Soviet troop strength, and announcing the adoption of a new military policy based on the primacy of strategic retaliatory power, set in motion momentous developments that have figured centrally in Soviet military affairs ever since. The Soviet armed forces were at last put firmly on the road towards the structural changes that seemed indicated by the nature of the new weapons, and Soviet strategic thinking was shaken out of its habitual modes, and forced to face the problems posed by the deepening array of new weapons on both sides of the iron curtain.

These developments did not take place without fierce battles between Khrushchev and the leaders of the military establishment. Tension was sharpest over the issue that struck most directly at the institutional interests of the military—the troop-cut issue. Khrushchev, determined to carry through on the consumer programmes to which he had linked his prestige, and feeling the pinch on resources levied by the new advanced weapons programmes, and the declining growth in the labour force caused by the birth gap of the war years, pressed insistently for manpower economies. The marshals, evidently regarding the issue as something of a test case relevant to the general question of the role of the military in the formulation of policy, resisted just as vigorously. On the whole, the battles seem to have come out fairly evenly. Troop cuts were made, a restructuring of the armed forces has taken place, and strategic thinking has adjusted accordingly. But none of these changes has been as far-reaching as Khrushchev originally proposed.[8]

Since his fall, something of a cease-fire has prevailed on the military-political front. The new political leaders have as a rule refrained from public discussions of military matters, and the military leaders have disputed no burning issues in public. Judging by the public indications,

[7] Raymond L. Garthoff, *Soviet Strategy in the Nuclear Age* (New York, 1958), p. 232.
[8] Cf. the author's 'Military Manpower: A Case Study', in *Problems of Communism*, May-June 1964, p. 53.

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the new regime has found common ground with the military leaders on the basis of a programme that is still strongly committed to the build-up of strategic strength but is attentive also to the improvement of all the sub-strategic capabilities that might be needed for emergencies short of general war. The new regime has presumably not abandoned the goals of economic development to which it has repeatedly committed itself. But as the costs of the new defence requirements mount and multiply, these goals appear to recede further into the future. The nuclear missile age, it seems, has not changed the traditional orientation of Soviet policy towards guns over butter, but has merely added new dimensions of magnitude to the social burdens this orientation entails.

Four different personal regimes have ruled the country since the October revolution, and each in its turn has found reasons to postpone the pursuit of the social goals to which the revolution was dedicated in the interests of building up military strength. Such consistency of purpose, demonstrated over so long a period, is a sombre back-drop against which to assess the future of the present regime. Yet it would be misleading to stress this note of historical continuity without noting at the same time the profound changes that have taken place in recent years in the Soviet political environment. Stalin is dead, the world communist movement is in shambles, and the nature of military power today has introduced incentives for caution and delicacy in the handling of foreign affairs that were not operating even a decade ago. There is little in all this that is likely to persuade the Soviet leaders that they should not continue to direct their military policy towards changing the 'relations of forces' in the world to their own advantage. But there is at least a chance that they may come to recognise that their own security is not in opposition to the security of the world, and that in fact the two have become interdependent.

The significance of an historical event can be measured not only by the social and political problems it solves but by those it leaves unsolved but set in a new context. Of these events, it can be said that nothing was the same again after they occurred. The October revolution stands in this relationship to the history of the Soviet armed forces. The revolution set the stage for this history, assigned the cast for the first act, and started the plot unfolding. How the play developed after that was determined not by the authors themselves, but by the players, in accordance with the logic of the circumstances in which they had been placed.

The men who made the revolution would not recognise the Soviet military establishment today as the offspring of their inspiration. But they would have a name for the phenomenon of modern society that it represents. The name would be 'militarism'—that system of iron necessities stemming from the requirements of war plans which governed the policies of governments in the pre-1917 world, and which the bolsheviks, in their naïveté, believed to be inherent in the nature of capitalism.

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FIFTY YEARS OF SOVIET AGRICULTURE

W. Klatt

THE Soviet Union enters the fiftieth year of its existence with the biggest grain harvest ever gathered in Russian history. Brezhnev and Kosygin have been most fortunate in having been able to announce, at the end of last year, a bumper crop. The official statement speaks of more than 170 million tons, but this figure has to be deflated a good deal so as to bring it down to the after-harvest weight at which crops are measured in the western world. However, even at 135 million tons the Soviet Union ought to be able, after having met all normal requirements at home and in eastern Europe, to put some 15 million tons into reserve. This surplus should go a long way towards meeting, in the next few years, such unforeseen crop failures as those which occurred in 1963 and 1965 and which, during the last three years, forced the Soviet authorities to spend altogether close on $2,000 million of foreign exchange on grain imports. This year a similar amount is being paid out in domestic currency as a bonus to home producers. The burden on the exchequer is far from negligible, but the saving of foreign currency will be most welcome.

Throughout Russia the benefits of this fortunate crop result will be felt. Not only will the farming community have a substantial rise in earnings, but the consumer will enjoy the increased supplies of livestock produce that will result from feeding more grain to farm animals. Most important of all, foreign exchange, not needed for importing cereals, will be available for the purchase abroad of industrial equipment, spare parts and know-how. Thus the Russian grain harvest of 1966 will indirectly contribute to bringing work and income to industries not only in Russia, but also in the western world. What better way could there be to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the revolution! At long last the Soviet grain problem seems to have been solved. Or has it?

Ever since the fateful autumn of 1917 the Soviet leaders have been preoccupied with grain. Starting with the Central Committee plenum of November 1929, on the eve of mass collectivisation, time and time again the grain problem has been said to have been solved. Yet in the 25 years that followed this statement more than one leading personality has lost his post, if not his head, over the question of the country's grain supplies. Considering that nowadays more than half the value of the annual farm output of Russia is derived from animal products, one might think that more attention should be devoted to this aspect of the farming industry, especially since the industrial consumer wants to reduce his intake of carbohydrates from cereals and to improve his diet by getting an increased supply of meat and dairy produce. But the situation has rarely been comfortable enough to allow the Soviet leaders

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to forget that all too often the fate of the nation has been determined by bread alone.

Approximately three-fifths of the country's arable acreage is still under grains, and half the food intake is consumed in the form of bread, flour, and cereals. Almost half the population lives in villages, and at least a third of the labour force is employed in agriculture. Out of the season there is still much idleness in the countryside, whilst at the peak of the season students have to be rushed to the land, no longer virgin, to harvest its often meagre grain crop. The rhythm of life in the country still dominates the capital. The patterns of food and farming resemble those of the underdeveloped parts of the world rather than those of the highly industrialised nations among which Russian now ranks—at some distance—behind the United States.

There thus exists a dichotomy in the social and economic pattern of Russia that merits some moments of reflection at the end of the first five decades of post-revolutionary development, during which Russia has failed to become the truly equalitarian society of which its revolutionary leaders had dreamed. There is no way of telling how things might have developed had the mood of change spread to central and western Europe in the manner anticipated by the Bolshevik leadership. To conclude from the absence of this development that 'socialism in one country' and the 'socialist transformation of the villages', that is, the permanent revolution from above, had become historical necessities, with Stalin 'operating within the logical consequences of Leninism',[1] would be to fall victim to the concept of historical determinism.

Had Lenin survived the Kronstadt mutiny long enough, his pragmatic mind might have prevailed over his party's revolutionism, and his new economic policy, instead of serving as a temporary expedient, might have become the opening phase in a process of industrialisation—'at the pace of a tortoise'—as Bukharin had suggested. Moreover, had the revolution led to a genuine alliance of workers and peasants and thus to democratic rule instead of democratic centralism, there might have been western cooperation instead of hostility. In that case, Russia might for some time have been obliged to exchange the surplus product of its grain economy for western farm requisites and industrial equipment. In fact, she exported in desperation, at the hight of the agrarian crisis in 1931, 'the five megatons of grain that were followed by five, or so, megadeaths in the next two years'.[2]

Leaving aside for the moment the sacrifices in human lives and happiness, the end-effect might not have been very different from what we now see: a mighty world power that has moved, within fifty years, from fifth to second place among the industrial nations of the world. Almost certainly its farming industry would be more closely integrated

[1] A. Nove–L. Labedz, 'Was Stalin Really Necessary?' in H. G. Shaffer, ed., *The Soviet System in Theory and Practice* (New York, 1965).

[2] O. Hoeffding, 'Soviet Collectivization and China's Great "Leap"', Conference on Soviet and Chinese Communism. Lake Tahoe, California, 1965.

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with the urban sectors of society than is in fact the case today. One final speculation: a steadily industrialising country, governed by majority rule rather than in the name of permanent revolution, might have deprived Hitler of the allies that he succeeded in gathering at home and abroad as the crusader against what he was able to present as a world-wide revolutionary menace.

It would be legitimate to interject here that speculation about the past seems idle, were it not for the possibility that a different course might be taken in similar circumstances at some time in the future. For the man of the future can have the benefit of hindsight and might thus be blessed with a choice of alternatives that seemed absent in the distant historical past. It is for this reason, and not for the sake of showing up the errors of the Bolshevik revolution, that its fiftieth anniversary calls for a critique of its agrarian policy.

THROUGHOUT Soviet history, the approach to the farming industry has been marked by a lack of rationality which has not affected other sectors of the Soviet economy to anything like the same degree. This lack of rationality may be explained to some extent by the very nature of agriculture, which the Marxist school and its followers have never handled very happily. It would be wrong to suggest that agriculture follows patterns of behaviour that are different from those observed in other spheres of human endeavour, but it has certain characteristics that are absent from the environment of other industries.

Farming, unlike industry, has to take into account space and weather as limiting factors. In normal conditions the cost of haulage is more decisive in determining farm sizes than certain economies of scale. In Soviet Russia the amalgamation of farms has been carried out without regard to the cost of transportation. As to the effect of weather and distance on labour, the farm-hand, who mostly works without a roof over his head and without a superior at close quarters, operates with a measure of freedom of decision that is most unusual in the case of the industrial worker of corresponding grade. The larger the farm, the greater the need to delegate decisions to the individual. In communist conditions the tendency is generally to do the opposite. Also, in agriculture—unlike industry—the producer, besides being a consumer of his own product, is mostly also a processor of finished products. He is therefore able to alter the pattern of production, utilisation, and marketing in many ways and thus to evade public controls far more effectively than the industrial producer, who is rarely a consumer of his product. Thus in agriculture, far more than in industry, a relationship of mutual trust is needed between the producer and the state. None of these characteristics of the farming industry has been taken properly into account during the fifty years of Soviet agricultural history. It seems doubtful whether they are fully understood in Russia even today. If they were, the conclusion would be inescapable that the existing system

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has to be dismantled rather than amended. The political consequences of such a recognition would be momentous indeed.

In the final analysis, the misunderstandings about the role of agriculture in modern industrial society and the resulting failures of agricultural policy throughout the five decades of Soviet history can be traced to a doctrinal concept that was based on a methodological error. The Marxist school and its followers have always insisted that small-scale farming, as they defined it, was economically backward, and that the peasant cultivator was therefore bound to be tied to politically reactionary forces hostile to the industrial working class. Had they measured farm performance in the same way as production in industry, they might have discovered that farms that are small in terms of acreage can be large, modern, and progressive enterprises when considered in terms of capital input and in output per man. In other words, it is the degree of intensity that matters and not the acreage—and any economies of scale have to be seen within this context.

The interrelationship between the size of the farms, according to acreage, and the intensity of farming, in terms of input and output, has never really been understood by any of the Soviet leaders. As a result of this methodological error, throughout their history they have found themselves in the position of making enemies of the owners of large farms whilst at the same time antagonising the small men in the villages. The Marxist school have never differentiated between the various forms of farm performance and have therefore never gained an understanding of the role of the intensively farming owner-occupier or tenant in a modern industrial setting. Whereas in industry the Marxist school has supported developments which are not altogether different from those in capitalist society, their agrarian concept flies in the face of all historical precedent. It is not surprising that this has created very special problems. The lack of understanding of the agrarian question emerges from one of those frequently quoted statements by Lenin on the subject: 'The peasant as a toiler gravitates towards socialism and prefers the dictatorship of the workers to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The peasant as a seller of grain gravitates towards the bourgeoisie, to free trade, i.e. back to the "habitual" old or "primordial" capitalism of former days.'[3] In fact, the peasant cultivator does nothing of the sort. Lenin's concept of the peasant's role in Russian society was little more accurate than the romantic picture of the 'naïvely socialist' villager that the narodniki had.

The Russian intellectuals, whether social-revolutionaries or bolsheviks, were strangely ignorant of the lives and views of four-fifths of their fellow-countrymen. But whilst the social-revolutionaries had the utopian vision of a socialist society created on the basis of rural communes, Lenin was primarily concerned with the revolution itself,

[3] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. XXIV (Moscow, 1932).

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which after 1905 he saw in two stages. At the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution he saw the peasantry tied to the industrial proletariat. Thereafter he expected the peasants to renounce the revolution and desert the industrial proletariat. At that stage Lenin saw the bolsheviks dividing the farming community against itself, using the poor villagers against the rich peasants. This dual task of the proletariat was regarded by Lenin as the essence of the bolshevik programme. He never considered the possibility of a gradual continuation of the process that had set in with the Stolypin reforms. Consequently, he never believed in a genuine, lasting alliance of interests between the producers and the consumers of the daily necessities of the nation. Thus the conflict of interests between the minority of industrial workers and the majority of villagers stood godmother to the bolshevik revolution of 1917. This was very nearly strangled by its own contradictions.

LENIN had never thought of the immense tasks which a successful revolutionary party would have to face in the years following the revolution. But as the strategist of the revolution he adjusted his party's programme to changing circumstances. After a lifelong controversy with the social-revolutionaries, he adopted their programme in the decree of 26 October [8 November] 1917, which authorised the seizure of the land by those on whose support the success of the October revolution depended. This decision sealed the fate of the Provisional Government and of the social-revolutionaries who had gained 21 million votes—against the bolsheviks' 9 million—in the elections to the constituent assembly, but who had been unwilling to give their consent to the transfer of land without compensation.

Lenin alone understood the mood of the revolting soldiers and peasants. The creation of large farm units, as anticipated in his party's programme, could await the completion of the revolution and the consolidation of the bolshevik regime throughout the land. Once more his political pragmatism was to prevail over party dogma. After the years of war communism, during which the towns had declared war on the countryside and had seized the stocks of grain instead of encouraging its production, the sailors of Krondstadt mutinied in March 1921. Being mostly country lads, they demanded, inter alia, the right of the peasants—their fathers, brothers and cousins—to keep their own livestock and to farm their own private plots. In the face of the rebellion Lenin saw the force of the sailors' claim and he gave way. Once again he postponed the amalgamation of individual farms and, as a temporary expedient, allowed the uncontrolled exchange of goods in the name of the new economic policy. Nobody can say with any degree of certainty how Lenin might have handled the emergence of a new agricultural bourgeoisie, the lack of a regular exchange of foodstuffs against industrial consumer goods, and the ensuing 'scissor crisis' had he retained his mental and physical capacities beyond the end of 1922

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when he suffered a severe stroke. Thirteen months later, following his death on 21 January 1924, the internecine war between the leaders who took over from Lenin broke into the open.

The controversy over the agrarian question provided one of the central issues of the conflict. In the debate between those in favour of rapid industrialisation, such as Trotsky and Preobrazhensky, and Bukharin, who spoke of the peasants as an active force in the revolution, Stalin—for a time—remained uncommitted, keeping to a middle course between the extreme factions. But it was Stalin who destroyed the peasantry as a coherent social force. Lenin's support for voluntary association was thrown to the winds. In the process of primitive socialist accumulation Stalin sacrificed the peasants in the interest of the most determined effort of industrialisation the world had yet seen.

The year 1967 is not only the fiftieth anniversary of the bolshevik revolution. It is also the fortieth anniversary of the adoption by the fifteenth congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union of the resolution that set in motion the collectivisation of Russia's peasant farms and the liquidation of the kulaks. This is described in the official party history as equivalent in its consequences to the revolution of October. In its course the villagers were classified in a manner as crude as the statistics on which it was based. The confusion and demoralisation caused reached stupendous dimensions. By 1932 the procurement of grain was more than twice as large as in 1927, though the harvest was a good deal smaller. By 1933, half the country's livestock had disappeared. The most moving, yet most authentic, record of this operation and the hunger and purges and deportations it brought in its wake has been preserved in the files of the headquarters of the Communist Party at Smolensk, which were captured by the invading German army and later taken to the United States.[4] It is not to be wondered at that Stalin, when questioned by Churchill about this phase of Soviet history, described it as a struggle more difficult and dangerous than that against nazi Germany.

The consequences of this operation have been recounted before.[5] On the eve of the second world war hardly any land remained in private hands. The opposition of the peasants had been broken, large-scale deportations had taken place, and irreparable damage had been done to the farming industry. Even within the framework of the collectives the peasants continued to be treated as enemies of the state rather than as vital members of a new industrial society. They had every reason to feel outcasts. Twenty-five years later, at the time of Stalin's death, farming was where it had been in the days of the Tsars. Admittedly, horses had been replaced by tractor power, thus freeing a large acreage formerly under fodder crops for the production of food. Even these modest results had been achieved only at great cost in men and animals.

[4] M. Fainsod, *Smolensk under Soviet Rule* (Santa Monica, 1958).
[5] W. Klatt, 'How Soviet Farming Fails', *New Society*, 25 August 1966.

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The results were particularly disappointing in livestock farming. The number of productive livestock was one-tenth smaller than before collectivisation was introduced. In the meantime the human population had grown by almost one-fifth. Milk yields and carcass weights, like grain yields, had remained unchanged. As a result, the nation's diet was smaller in volume and poorer in composition at the time of Stalin's death than it had been a quarter of a century earlier. The farming community was much worse off than it had been before collectivisation began. Whereas industrial production had recovered from the devastation caused by the German invasion, the supply of farm products continued to lag behind. The cleavage created when forced industrialisation and collectivisation had driven the two sections of Soviet society apart in the early thirties had widened rather than narrowed.

THE ten years of Khrushchev's rule were largely taken up by attempts to remedy this situation. During his time of office he made close on two hundred speeches exclusively concerned with agriculture. Every year the leader of the second largest industrial nation in the world spent a month touring the countryside, criticising shortcomings and suggesting remedies. Nearly every plenary session of the Central Committee had farming on its open or secret agenda. Yet when Khrushchev was removed from power, his successors had nothing good to say about his agricultural policy. Posterity is likely to be more impartial and to balance his failures against his achievements. There were many of both. In the technical sphere, Khrushchev started three major campaigns: the reclamation of the virgin lands in Central Asia; the introduction of maize as a feed grain and a green fodder; and the abolition of ley farming, that is, putting grassland under the plough. At the same time, major changes were made in the administrative sphere. These included the abolition of the machine tractor stations—in Stalin's days considered an essential ingredient of collectivised agriculture—and the transfer of their equipment to the collectives. He further eliminated the agricultural ministries as controlling organs of the farm industry and limited their responsibilities to research and advisory services. Finally, he divided the party along 'lines of production', agriculture being assigned to a special department with the object of involving the party directly in the affairs of the countryside, whilst giving its first secretary direct access to regional and local cadres. Much of this was done in a highly unorthodox manner, and some of it was undone when it proved impracticable.

In the economic sphere there were also major innovations. The farming industry, which for a quarter of a century had been the chief, if not the only, source of capital accumulation for investment in industry, was granted a growing portion of the exchequer's funds. Moreover, increases in farm prices and agricultural wages and reductions in taxes and delivery obligations resulted in an increase of 50 per cent in the

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disposable income of the farming community. As one quarter of the collective farmer's cash income had to be reinvested, rural living standards at the end of Khrushchev's reign, though improved by comparison with the dismal level attained in 1953, were still substantially below those of the industrial workers, who in turn had a considerably more modest standard of living than their counterparts in western industrialised societies.

The technological changes also yielded limited results only. The extension of the acreage in Central Asia resulted in a substantial, though precarious, addition to the supply of grain. When the reserves of the soil in Kazakhstan were exhausted, the effects were most damaging. The maize campaign provided supplementary fodder for the dairy herd, but the maize silage failed to provide the plant protein badly needed in the production of animal protein. The ploughing-up of grassland was designed to remedy this shortcoming, but it was denied its full success because of the lack of fertilisers. Khrushchev's farm policy falls into two clearly distinct periods. During the first five years, up to 1958, he was remarkably successful, mobilising the untapped, but readily available, resources of the country. During the second half of his reign his short-term remedies failed. The crop disaster of 1963 which made necessary a cut in pig numbers by 30 million, or over 40 per cent, and an import of over 10 million tons of grain—an all-time record—was nature's revenge for the mistakes committed in the past. It showed how vulnerable Soviet agriculture remained in spite of all the improvements made during a decade in which the farming industry received more public recognition than at any other time since the October revolution.

Whenever technical or economic measures proved to be insufficient, Khrushchev turned to organisational remedies and relied on the lead which the party cadres were supposed to provide throughout the countryside. He never recognised the fundamental errors underlying the party doctrine; or if he did recognise them, he was unable or unwilling to draw the necessary conclusions. He probably committed his most serious error when—from a doctrinal posture—he began to interfere with the private plot, the only sector of the farm economy that could legitimately claim satisfactory results. Whilst it may never be possible to establish, with any degree of certainty, the reasons for the removal of Khrushchev in October 1964 from his position of leadership in both the party and government, there can hardly be any doubt that the failure of his farm policy played a role in the party's decision to depose him.

In the event, the ten years of agricultural policy under Khrushchev yielded an increased, though precarious, supply of food and fodder, without getting anywhere near the ambitious targets set for 1965. The diet, still overburdened with carbohydrates and short of animal proteins, continued to lag behind that of the United States which for ten years provided the yardstick of things supposedly within reach in the Soviet

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Union. The distance between the two countries was as great in the level of output as in that of consumption. At the end of Khrushchev's reign the farming industry of the United States produced, with one-fifth of the Soviet farm labour force on an area equal to two-thirds of the Soviet sown acreage, a volume of farm products approximately three-fifths larger than that of the Soviet Union. Yields of all major crops, as well as milk yields and carcass weights, were at best half as much in the Soviet Union as those attained in the United States. Productive livestock per head of the Soviet population was only four-fifths of the corresponding figure in the United States. The gap was particularly striking as regards the labour requirements in agriculture. In Khrushchev's own assessment, five to seven times as much labour as in the United States was needed in arable farming in the Soviet Union, and up to sixteen times as much in livestock farming. At the time of his fall the pattern both of farm productivity and of food production was that of a backward country. Yet in the industrial and military sphere Russia could legitimately claim to be the second most powerful nation in the world. There is no reason to think that this discrepancy will disappear as a result of the policy of consolidation, following a temporary retrenchment, on which Khrushchev's successors have embarked since 1964.

THE first measure of any consequence taken by the new leaders was the restoration to its previous size of the private plot belonging to members of the collectives and rural and urban workers, which had been reduced—on Khrushchev's insistence—in 1956. Other concessions followed. Many of the new measures amounted to a continuation of Khrushchev's policies—by different means. Others were of an altogether different nature. The 'urgent measures for the further development of Soviet agriculture', introduced by Brezhnev at the plenary meeting of the Central Committee held in March 1965, have not been without effect. The announcement of fixed grain delivery quotas for a period of six years, the payment of a bonus of 50 per cent for above-quota deliveries, the increase in purchase prices for livestock and animal products, the increase in farm investment, and the introduction of a modest pension for retired members of collectives are likely to have created an atmosphere in the countryside more favourable than has existed since collectivisation was introduced forty years ago.

The gradual introduction of a guaranteed monthly pay for members of collectives, at rates corresponding to those in force on state farms, which was announced at the twenty-third party congress in the spring of 1966, was the most important innovation of the new leadership. If this promise is in fact kept, it should remove one of the chief grievances of the collective farmers. For forty years they have not been granted financial rewards for taking the kind of risks for which farmers in the western world feel entitled to claim a return; nor have they been eligible for a minimum wage, as it applies in the case of workers on state farms

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and in industry. They have thus had the worst of both worlds. At long last this is to be put right—fifty years after the revolution.

One major promise has yet to be fulfilled. The third kolkhoz congress, which is to adopt a new farm charter in place of the outdated one of 1935, has still not taken place. It was first scheduled to take place early in 1959, but it was repeatedly—and even recently—postponed for reasons not stated. As the commission charged with drafting the new agricultural model charter has not yet released its findings, the results of this conference cannot be anticipated with any degree of certainty. If the liberal critics of present farm policies were to gain ground, substantial improvements in the structure and performance of agriculture could result. If the traditionalists hold their ground—and this seems more probable in present conditions—no startling changes are likely. Although realism and caution are seemingly taking the place of the irrationalities and ambitions of the past, there remains a serious lack of understanding of the role of agriculture in the national economy and the place of the farmer in modern society. Brezhnev and Kosygin remain captives of their own and their party's political past. Basically the erroneous views adhered to during the first five decades of Soviet rule persist, and the peasants continue to be regarded as politically expendable, even if—as a matter of expediency—they are temporarily treated with more concern than in the past.

In the meantime the air is full of proposals from various sources as to the ways and means of improving the performance of the farm industry, of increasing the standard of living of the rural community, and of integrating it with the rest of Soviet society. So far agriculture has been largely excluded from the structural changes that have been introduced, experimentally and on a limited scale, in the industrial sphere. Brezhnev and Kosygin, like their predecessors, have so far shown no sign of wishing to interfere with the structure of the farm industry or the pattern of farm operations. This unwillingness to introduce basic changes has not prevented various authors from putting forward more or less drastic proposals, but nobody has yet succeeded in challenging effectively the basic concepts that underlie Soviet farm policy.

THIS is not to say that no attempts are being made to improve the performance of the farm industry. On the contrary, the latest efforts are directed at turning the state farms at long last into profitable enterprises. But things move slowly. Two years ago Brezhnev urged that state farms should move to full economic accounting (khozraschet), but many of them still continue to receive public assistance for their capital investment programme and yet end up with substantial losses on current account. Any improvements in technical, economic, and administrative matters are bound to help in reaching the targets set for 1970, the end of the current plan. Although these goals are more modest than those

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originally set by Khrushchev, they will be far from easy to reach. Certain setbacks cannot be ruled out, since the input of farm requisites is not yet large and varied enough to counterbalance the fluctuations in yield which are still a mark of Soviet farming. In fact, an increase in five years of 25 per cent over and above the current level of farm production would be no mean feat. On the consumption side strict limits are set by the fact that even the cost of the present, somewhat monotonous, diet, absorbs half the working-class family's income. Unless industrial wages are raised more than in recent years or retail prices are lowered substantially—and there is little likelihood of either—the intake of food will not increase or improve dramatically.[6]

With regard to the fundamental issue of the structure of farming, changes on both state farms and collectives remain subjects of unofficial debate rather than official action. The most controversial issue is that of the role of the individual and his family in agriculture as against that of the state and its agencies. Here the discussion on the significance of the 'link' (*zveno*), which has flared up in the past whenever there was an opportunity of challenging the authority of central and local party organs, has been revived. In its most extreme form it represents a rejection of the concept of collective operations under party direction; but extreme views are rarely uttered. For the time being fairly moderate experiments are advocated. Limited areas of cropland are being allocated for a certain period of time to a team of farm workers or members of collectives, in order to counter the indifference which is the most prominent feature of the 'Farming Anonymous Inc.' that rules the Soviet countryside.

The need to arouse the interest of the operating farmhands became urgent when more and more of them abandoned their place of work in the unattractive conditions of Central Asia. It was thus not surprising that Zhulin, the most vocal advocate of the link system, originally recommended small operational units for the farms in the virgin lands. It is not without significance that the traditional areas of peasant farming, where the family zveno was the normal unit of operation, have so far not been found suitable for this kind of innovation. *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, the party organ whose task it is to cater for the young in town and country, has provided a platform for these proposals, whilst the official organs of the party and the Ministry of Agriculture have shown little enthusiasm for experiments which are bound to interfere with the pattern of things that is to the liking of the bureaucrats.

Whereas Soviet industry is beginning to accept innovations such as measuring success in terms of sales and profits, no Nemchinov or Liberman has yet risen from the ashes to which Stalin burned the countryside some forty years ago. Venzher, who courageously stuck out his neck when it was still dangerous to do so, is once again among

[6] W. Klatt, 'Soviet Farm Output and Food Supply in 1970', *St. Antony's Papers*, No. 19 (Oxford, 1966).

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those in the forefront of the campaign in favour of liberalising the farming industry. He wishes to see prices and market forces take the place of central planning and state procurement, but so far he has not met with the response from official quarters which in industry is taken more or less for granted nowadays. The sinews of the agrarian fabric remain fully stretched; they leave little room for slack. That is why Brezhnev and Kosygin, not unlike Khrushchev before them, prefer to limit their reforms to the area of technical and administrative detail and to leave more fundamental changes in the structure of Soviet farming to an unspecified date in the future.

Russia is entering a period charged with emotion, and an over-generous gesture could damage beyond repair the sluices of carefully controlled public opinion and private sentiment. It is not only heroic achievements that are being remembered in October 1967. Among the demonstrating young men and women there are all too many unable to find the graves of their fathers on which to place flowers, while the flags flutter over the platforms from which the achievements of five decades are celebrated. The present leadership hope to avoid answering for the hecatombs which were the price of these achievements, but they will not be able to defer indefinitely the moment of reckoning. On the day when a full account is given, Soviet agriculture will no longer be what it is today; the mammoth state farms and collectives as we know them now will have become a matter of the past.

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TECHNOLOGY AND NATIONALISM

John R. Thomas

AS the Soviet Union marks its fiftieth anniversary, its leaders face a gigantic paradox. The expansion of the country's power since 1917 should have enhanced its position as the base for world revolution; in fact, it has lost both its own internal ideological drive for carrying out such a task and its external appeal as a model for imitation. Moreover, the Soviet Union's desire and ability to behave like a revolutionary state have been severely compromised by developments that have compelled it to behave in many respects like a traditional great power; its representatives are no longer viewed as selfless revolutionaries dedicated to a universal cause but rather as agents of a traditional great power pursuing Russian national interests.

Driven by the urge to build up Soviet national power quickly (by telescoping development time into years instead of decades), at the expense of balanced industrial and consumer growth, the Soviet leadership lessened the attractions of the Soviet model as a pattern for *economic* development, while the harsh methods used to execute its policy repelled others from viewing the Soviet practice as a model of *political* development.

These liabilities have been increased by an inability to foresee and cope with the powerful forces of technology and nationalism which have affected the development of all countries in the twentieth century. Paradoxically, these two forces have propelled the Soviet Union to world power status but have prevented it from converting this quantitative leap into a world communist triumph. Technology has made it possible for the Soviet Union to develop immense economic and military power, but the destructive force of nuclear-missile weapons has inhibited the use of this power to advance the communist cause because of the danger to Soviet national survival itself.

The forces of nationalism tore the world apart in the two world wars, forces which the Soviet Union was able to exploit against the West, particularly in the underdeveloped world. Yet they also served to shatter the unity of the communist world: Marxist ideology, which the Soviets believed would override the centrifugal forces of nationalism, has failed to contain them. These contradictions indicate how little practical guidance can be derived from Marxist ideology. The inability to cope with such forces as technology and nationalism suggests why the Soviet Union has not succeeded and is unlikely to succeed as a revolutionary force in the world. Indeed, because of its increasing irrelevance, Marxism threatens to retard Soviet progress. Within the Soviet Union today there is a crisis arising from doubts whether

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Marxism and its interpreter, the communist party, are relevant to the Soviet Union's current problems, and whether the party can maintain its control and at the same time make the Soviet system more efficient.

The rapid advance of technology has drastically affected the Soviet Union's international position by magnifying old, and raising new, problems of internal development and external relations. The strategic aspect poses the most critical problem facing the Soviet Union on its fiftieth anniversary. This derives from nuclear-missile weapons which pose, as never before, the ultimate threat to national survival. This threat has served as the main factor in curbing Soviet revolutionary ambitions by revealing the great disadvantages of the Soviet Union's geopolitical situation. Striving to be a global power like the United States, the Soviet Union does not, because of its location on the Eurasian continent, have the advantages of the US. In a balance of power context, it does not have the option of playing an offshore role in any conflict on the Eurasian continent. Nor does it have the option of detaching itself from either Europe or Asia or both. While the USA is unlikely to do so, it nevertheless has the choice of disregarding both Europe and Asia. The Soviet Union's two-continent location also imposes strategic disadvantages which do not confront the European nations. Thus, while western Europe faces a direct threat only from the East, the Soviet Union must consider a challenge from both the East and the West. Consequently, Soviet capabilities cannot be measured by simply matching them against those of either the United States or west Europe or both, since this does not reflect the real magnitude of the Soviet Union's disadvantages. The economic and military capabilities of west Europe alone are, or can be, equal to those of the Soviet Union; yet its advantage may be even greater because of the Soviet Union's need to divide its strength to meet potential threats on both flanks.

This suggests the magnitude and complexities of the strategic problems facing the Soviet Union, which have served and are likely to serve as constraints on Soviet freedom of action abroad. Russia faces a traditional continental rival—West Germany—whose strength, in its view, may be enhanced in the future by nuclear weapons and missiles. Even if there is no objective basis for believing that West Germany will in the future acquire its own nuclear-missile capabilities, Moscow assumes this will or may occur and takes this into account in its contingency planning. It also assumes that West Germany will dominate any future alliance arrangements in west Europe; either through such arrangements, or independently, Germany will get access to nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union already considers that existing West German-American arrangements give Bonn a finger on the nuclear trigger. Moreover, it believes that the Germans already have the capabilities for independent production of missile weapons and are

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constrained at present only by political expediency.[1] But even if it should acquire its own nuclear-missile armaments, West Germany would be of relatively little concern to the Russians if it were the only threat: they could handle such a threat by their superior ground forces, nuclear-missile capabilities, and greater resources.

The potential threat posed by China has added another dimension to Soviet strategic problems on the Eurasian continent. With the defeat of Japan in 1945, the Soviets assumed they had permanently solved the two-front threat posed before the Second World War by Germany and Japan. In their present contingency planning they must assume a hostile China, either alone or in implicit collusion with West Germany. Indeed, the two are already viewed as anti-Soviet allies, since both are credited with designs on Soviet-held territory.

On top of the traditional Eurasian threat, the United States has added an entirely new dimension to post-war Soviet strategic problems. This differs from any Eurasian threat in three respects: (1) the USA is a non-continental power and hence beyond the reach of Soviet ground forces; (2) the USA has at the moment a much greater nuclear-missile arsenal than the Soviets; and (3) it has the resources to enlarge its military capabilities which the Soviets cannot hope to match in the foreseeable future unless Washington deliberately permits them to get the edge. Consequently, the USA-USSR confrontation poses almost insoluble problems for Moscow. Unlike a German attack on the Soviet Union, which could be blunted by the traditional Russian strategy of trading space for time, an American missile attack cannot be met by the space-for-time solution. Indeed, such an attack for the first time threatens Soviet political centres without the need to invade Soviet territory. These apprehensions are reflected in discussions of the political and military consequences of nuclear war. To avoid such consequences and to meet an American missile threat, the Soviets have devoted great effort to *developing* missile defence, an entirely new weapons system with strategic repercussions on the Soviet-American global confrontation.[2] For the Soviets to *deploy* missile defence on a massive, area-defence basis, however, would require sizable resources; this may be beyond the capability of the Soviet economy in the near future, unless other priorities are abandoned. In the absence of an *effective* missile defence, Moscow is likely to refrain from even low-level probing by their own forces around their periphery if this threatens to involve the United States.

The requirements of support for national liberation wars confront the Soviet Union with a third strategic problem: how to project its military power beyond its periphery. As in the case of missile defence,

[1] See Soviet note in *Pravda*, 4 February 1964.

[2] For a discussion of missile defence see John R. Thomas, 'The Role of Missile Defense in Soviet Strategy and Foreign Policy', in *The Military-Technical Revolution: Its Impact on Strategy and Foreign Policy*, John Erickson, ed. (New York, 1966).

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a capability different from that represented by traditional ground forces is required. It is trying to solve the problem by developing airlift and sealift capabilities as well as trained amphibious and airborne forces. But this task, like missile defence, adds another burden to the already overburdened Soviet economy. Moreover, the willingness to use even enhanced military capabilities for direct support of national liberation wars may be affected by the same risks to Soviet national security inherent in the employment of Soviet forces in other conflict situations.

In short, the Soviets are confronted by the gigantic problem of developing separate and non-interchangeable capabilities for countering a missile attack from America, for stopping a ground attack on the Eurasian continent from East or West or both, and for supporting non-peripheral national liberation wars. Given the limitation on their resources and the rising demands for satisfying domestic needs, they cannot hope to acquire all these simultaneously in the near future.

Domestic Impact of Technology

Just as modern technology has damped Soviet ardour to advance the revolutionary cause by the use of its own forces, so has it affected the Soviet Union's internal development, and in a similar sense. The epicentre of the impact has been the party's position within the Soviet Union.

Ever since 1917, the party has sought to shape internal Soviet development by formulating and enforcing political, economic and cultural guidelines, and to preserve the vitality and relevance of Marxist-Leninist ideology to Soviet life. It has preserved its control over Soviet society even at the expense of efficiency, when this was necessary. But its omnipresent and omnipotent hold on the Soviet system is being gradually eroded by conditions beyond its control, and this has given other groups a greater role: the military because it mans the very complex modern weapons systems, the industrial-governmental bureaucracy because it is needed to run the increasingly complicated Soviet economy, and the intellectuals because they are needed to mobilise the enthusiasm of the increasingly educated Soviet citizenry. The role of these groups is being played out while the younger generations, with no direct links with the past, are questioning this very past and thus compelling the older generations to defend the rationale of the Soviet system. This leads to what is the crucial long-range problem for the Soviet leaders: the changing role of the communist party.

When the Soviet industrial system was relatively primitive, the use of untutored party activists as watchdogs over all phases of Soviet life was not an apparent liability. Now the more complex and sophisticated Soviet economy cannot be run in this way. For one thing, the system is operated by highly skilled personnel—in the armed forces, industry and science—who now constitute a much larger proportion of the labour force, and who require both more intelligent and subtle

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controls than the heavy-handed party system offers, as well as a greater diversion of resources to satisfy their personal needs. At a minimum, the party man assigned to control functions must himself have some degree of scientific, technical, or military skill. But in this case his party loyalty may be diluted by professional pride; at the extreme, it may even make him question the need for the party to run the system since it may be apparent to him, as well as to the people he supervises, that the system could be run more effectively without the party.

This process is abetted by the growing inability of Marxist-Leninist ideology to provide answers to the problems of modernisation generated by advancing technology. In fact, the modernisation process has created the central dilemma facing the party. To modernise and develop the Soviet Union's national power, the party had to educate the Russian masses. This has led many Soviet citizens to ask, in pursuit of their professional duties, precisely the kind of question to which the ideology cannot supply the answer. As a result, many within the Soviet Union today consider Marxist-Leninist ideology at best to be irrelevant to the modernisation problems facing the country, and at worst to be an obstacle to Soviet progress.

The developing resistance of Soviet technocrats (military, managerial, governmental, etc.) to the party's ideological indoctrination and rigidity in the face of changing conditions has several adverse effects for the party. First, because these groups consider ideology irrelevant or an obstacle, they tend to be increasingly pragmatic and apolitical in their approach to the solution of problems facing the Soviet system. And if the technocratic groups lose their ideological fervour, the Soviet Union loses its revolutionary drive, and the party loses its claim to primacy within Soviet society.

Second, the new elites recognise that efficient operation of the Soviet system requires policies which are well defined and appropriate to new economic conditions. Increasingly, therefore, they wish not to implement party-controlled policy, but to formulate policy themselves. This of course is anathema to the party, since policy-making is a prime source of party control. Whereas the new elites are interested primarily in efficiency, the party, if forced to choose between efficiency and control, will choose control. An example of this conflict is the Soviet military's challenge to the party's role in the armed forces and its assessment of the country's strategic needs. Marshal Zhukov was purged explicitly for trying to reduce or eliminate party interference in the professional military's responsibilities. And Khrushchev's pronouncement in January 1960 that Soviet strategy would be based primarily on nuclear-missile forces triggered further military opposition, since such a strategy could be imposed only at the expense of the ground forces. This met the opposition of the Soviet marshals and moved them to seek a voice in formulating as well as implementing strategy. The party's concern over such a development was reflected in criticism of Marshal

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Sokolovsky's *Voennaya Strategia*, a book which attempted to define Soviet strategy and was attacked for encroaching on the prerogatives of the political leadership.

The party's strained effort to prove that even under single command, nominally without commissars, the military commander needs the help of the party activists in the army to keep its morale and combat potential at high level suggests the continuing tensions between the military and the party. The party has had to respond by easing the pressure for ideological conformity and by catering in a different manner to the increasing interest of the military, particularly the younger officers, in strictly technical solutions to strategic problems.

How the problem of party control is solved is fundamental. If it tries to adhere to an outdated revolutionary ideology and to exercise the kind of total control that worked in Lenin's and Stalin's day, it may risk a weakening of the system. On the other hand it may change from an ideologically-oriented group with a vested interest in advocating and promoting world revolution to a more pragmatic group concerned primarily, if not exclusively, with domestic progress. The first signs of such a change appeared during the last years of Khrushchev's rule. As part of an apparent attempt to reform the party, it was 'discovered' that Lenin had foreseen the need to replace political agitators with economic organisers.[3] This seemed to be an effort to find and justify a new role for the party: having fulfilled the political aims of establishing communist rule, the party could now turn to economic specialisation and thus transform itself into a necessary component of the Soviet Union's modernisation. If Khrushchev's successors manage to establish such a role for the party, it will be converted from an organisation providing ideological guidance from *above* to one providing specialised knowledge *within* Soviet society. It is not suggested that such a transformation will occur in the near future, since this is a political leap requiring leaders even further removed from Leninism-Stalinism than Khrushchev's successors. But a significant transformation in the long run cannot be excluded. Indeed, the party's ultimate survival may depend on its ability to find a necessary role for itself in the modernisation of the Soviet Union.

Khrushchev's successors have already found it necessary to ease the heavy hand of party control, and in doing so they are establishing precedents for the eventual rationalisation of the Soviet system. At the same time they are creating an atmosphere in which their decisions are no longer accepted without question. Witness the spectacle of foreign communist parties sending delegations to Moscow in 1964 to question the reasons for Khrushchev's removal. Who would have dared to do so in Stalin's days? In a rudimentary fashion, the questioning is also taking hold internally, particularly among Soviet military and literary figures. Most important, party members are now challenging such

[3] See *Pravda*, 28 September, 1962.

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things as the rigging of party meetings. If and when this questioning spreads through the whole system, it could signal a significant transformation of the Soviet system. This would not necessarily make the system any less hostile to the West, but it would by its rationality tend to avoid the excesses of one-man rule.

Impact of Nationalism

The forces of internal change unleashed by destalinisation have also affected the Soviet Union's external relations. Because it cannot command voluntary obedience, and is unable or unwilling to impose its will on others by force, the Soviet Union has been subjected to the damaging play of nationalism both in the communist and non-communist worlds. This may ultimately reduce or eliminate its desire to advance the world communist revolution, a desire that has already been severely frustrated by the dangers of nuclear-missile technology.

Today, the Soviet Union not only does not command but, on the contrary, faces a threat to its interests *within* the communist world. This threat has two dimensions: the problems posed by other communist states and parties beyond Soviet control; the direct threat to national security and to its leadership of the communist world posed by China.

To take the first: Tito's defiance of Stalin in 1948 unleashed forces of nationalism which have eroded Soviet control over other parties and other communist states. In pursuit of their national interests, these parties and states have the power to bring about an American-Soviet confrontation or to hamper Soviet policy. For example, in the Cuban crisis, Castro opposed the Soviet Union's withdrawal of its missiles, and almost created a situation in which American military power might have been directed against the Soviets even when the latter were prepared to withdraw. The same dilemma, in a less acute form, confronted the Soviet leaders in the Middle East crisis. In future, too, minor communist allies could undertake independent action which would seriously embarrass Moscow, and would be open to exploitation by rivals in the communist world. (Thus, the Chinese chided the Soviets for having betrayed Cuba by their missile withdrawal in the 1962 crisis, and repeated the charge during the Middle East crisis.)

The inability to control other communist parties and states may also prove embarrassing in non-crisis situations. For example, Russia might at a given moment stress an improvement in state relations with non-communist regimes, which would call for a go-slow policy on subversion by the indigenous communist parties. But these parties could obstruct the policy of improving state relations, as Castro did at the Havana meetings in 1966 and 1967. By proclaiming unlimited subversion in the western hemisphere as the communist goal, he made it more difficult for the Soviet Union to woo the countries of Latin America away from Washington's influence. It is not unlikely that other communist states

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will in the future pursue their own regional ambitions contrary to Soviet interests. (Even under Stalin, Dimitrov attempted to organise a Balkan federation, but he was slapped down.) Such situations, at a minimum, narrow Moscow's freedom of action and, at a maximum, create dangerous situations for Soviet national security.

But nationalism within the communist world entails more than risks and embarrassment. The Soviet Union is now confronted by China's two-pronged threat—to her national security and to her leadership in the communist world. On the first, China has pushed developments to the point where the question of open Sino-Soviet conflict is no longer excluded from consideration.[4] On the second, the Chinese have further exposed the lack of unity within the communist world and have emerged as the rival to Soviet leadership in that world. This has gravely undermined the Soviet boast about the unity of the communist world in contrast to the capitalist world, torn apart by conflicting interests.

Nationalism and the Third World

Nationalism has not only upset the Soviet position within the communist world; it has also frustrated its revolutionary ambitions in the developing world, an area where Moscow once had high expectations of success, since these countries were thought to be the weakest link in the western chain of control and provided the strategic reserve of resources and manpower for the West. In the period between the two world wars, Soviet predictions seemed highly unrealistic, given the relative stability of the western empires. But in the years immediately following the second world war, the Soviet analysis appeared to be validated as the forces of nationalism unleased around the globe dissolved these empires; the Soviets had some reason to believe that their hopes were on the verge of realisation.

In their contacts with the Soviet Union, the third world nations are finding out that, contrary to Soviet claims of rendering disinterested aid, this aid differs little from that of the former western colonialists. At the same time, the Soviets are caught in a contradiction between their short-term goal of wooing the non-communist regimes and their long-term objectives of overthrowing them: they must deal with indigenous non-communist, nationalist regimes, and in some cases actively aid them in order to compete with the West for influence. This competition, often stimulated by opportunist playing off of the West against the Soviets by these regimes, has forced Moscow to pay a high price for its interests in the underdeveloped world, at the cost

[4] Soviet military leaders have openly shown their concern that the Chinese Army may be used in hostilities against the Soviet Union. See *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 27 December 1966. The growing Chinese nuclear-missile capability will undoubtedly add to Soviet apprehensions in the long run, even if there is a temporary reconciliation in the near future.

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of divesting scarce resources from Soviet domestic needs.[5] Moreover, the policy is in some respects counterproductive. Some recipient regimes are misusing Soviet aid to advance their own external objectives; in the process they create situations liable to involve Russia in dangerous confrontations with the West, or contrary to the Soviet objective of extending its own influence, rather than advancing the ambitions of local leaders, e.g. Nasser in the Middle East.[6]

Secondly, some indigenous non-communist regimes use Soviet aid to strengthen themselves and weaken the local communist parties, as the Indonesian army did. This is not only a source of embarrassment to the Soviet Union in the communist world, but militates against the long-term Soviet goal of building up indigenous local parties for subversion of the non-communist regime. It is unlikely that the Soviets will be able to resolve this dilemma. They are unlikely to have an opportunity to use their own forces in these areas by direct conquest (as the old colonial empires did), unless the West totally abandons the third world to its fate. Consequently, the Soviets may be forced to reconcile itself to the existence of these non-communist regimes and to the need to genuinely coexist with them instead of plotting to overthrow them.

These tendencies may be reinforced by the possibility that the displacement of non-communist regimes by indigenous communist parties could be detrimental to Soviet interests. This is already illustrated by China and by Cuba. Indeed, the threat from China may produce a vested Soviet interest in shoring up non-communist regimes as counterweights to China. This already appears to apply to Soviet policy, towards India and Indonesia.

Soviet Ambitions and the Advanced Nations

Technology and nationalism have had the greatest impact on Soviet revolutionary ambitions in the advanced nations; these were once the arena of Moscow's most optimistic expectations. During the first years of their regime the Bolsheviks expected their own revolution to ignite similar upheavals in Europe. When it did not, the more realistic policy adopted by Stalin of building socialism in one country had notable implications for the status of the Soviet Union as a revolutionary state.

Khrushchev tried to revive Soviet ambitions by his policy of peaceful competition, but he failed because the two were incompatible: and since the route of open aggression was barred by the danger of nuclear extinction, the policy of peaceful coexistence, while not excluding the controlled use of threats of force, had to rely on other means.

[5] Saburov admitted at the twenty-first party congress that he and others had reservations about Soviet aid to non-communist regimes, and Khrushchev had to defend the massive aid to the UAR in 1964 by emphasising its advantages.

[6] See *Pravda*, 18 May 1964, for Khrushchev's criticism of Nasser when he visited Egypt. Recent events in the Middle East illustrated the dilemma even more glaringly.

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Khrushchev planned to achieve the extension of Soviet power by raising Soviet living standards to a level that would make other people want to imitate the Soviet model. This was the political rationale of his five- and seven-year plans, and his possibly genuine delusion as late as 1959 (after the best Soviet crop before the 1966 one) about overtaking the United States in the very near future. Khrushchev's peaceful coexistence policy implied further a reallocation of Soviet resources towards consumer industries in order to make the Soviet Union a socialist showcase.

But his foreign policy moves worked in the opposite direction. His rocket rattling and his insistence on involving Soviet prestige in almost every situation around the globe from the Congo to Cuba served to arouse the West—much as Stalin's threats brought NATO into being—and led the United States in particular to build up its strategic power to the point that made Khrushchev's threats *not* credible. In turn, Russia was forced to divert more resources to its armed forces. This had dual disadvantages for the Soviet Union: it could not hope to match the American military buildup; and at the same time the diversion of resources to military purposes forestalled the construction of the Soviet economic showcase.

These setbacks had repercussions on the west European communist parties; instead of being obedient tools of Soviet foreign policy, they now try to dissociate themselves from close identification with the Soviet Union because few Europeans want to take it as a model. And, while suffering from a decline in revolutionary enthusiasm and from varying degrees of bureaucratic rigidity, they are pursuing their own independent policies in terms of the national context.

Future Soviet Policy

What does the impact of post-war technology and nationalism on Soviet revolutionary expectations and behaviour portend for the future, now that nuclear-missile weaponry has made major war unthinkable?

Immediately after the second world war the Soviets proclaimed that the first saw the rise of the first socialist state, the second the rise of the socialist bloc, and the third world war, if ' unleased by the imperialists ', would produce a socialist world. But the realisation that a nuclear war could result in physical annihilation made them retreat from the belief that an unavoidable conflict with the capitalist world would produce world communism, and this has sharpened the paradox that, despite their growing military might, the Soviets cannot count on using their own forces to expand communism beyond the areas where communist rule was imposed in the wake of the second world war.

The scaling down of Soviet ambitions may be foreshadowed by recent signs of Soviet interest in stability around its immediate periphery and even in more remote areas, in contrast to its earlier behaviour as a revolutionary state dedicated to promoting subversion around the globe. The clearest example on the periphery was the Soviet mediation effort in

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the Indian-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir in 1965. On that occasion, rather than taking advantage of the conflict to incite the local parties to subvert the indigenous non-communist regimes, Moscow helped to prevent these regimes from destroying each other. Soviet national interests overrode those of the indigenous communist parties, and the mediation effort was made at the expense of the interests of China, formally a communist ally.

In the non-peripheral area, efforts to promote stability were clearly shown in the Soviet reaction to Castro's declaration of unlimited subversion in the western hemisphere at the Tri-Continental meeting in Havana in 1966. Anxious to retain the good will of the non-communist regimes in Latin America, Moscow implicitly disassociated itself from Castro in its response to enquiries from Uruguay and other countries on the Soviet attitude to Castro's declaration. The gap between Cuban and Soviet policies in Latin America opened still wider at the conference of the Organisation for Latin American Solidarity in Havana in 1967.

The Soviet leaders have on numerous occasions since 1945 repeated that to safeguard Russian interests and preserve national security, they had allied themselves with non-communists before and would be prepared to do so again. Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko noted in 1961 that if the United States and the Soviet Union were to join forces to keep the peace, no power in the world could withstand them. Later, Soviet military leaders noted that the second world war had demonstrated that allies with conflicting ideologies could work together to meet *any* aggressor.[7] Since the Sino-Soviet dispute was then at one of its high points, it can be assumed that this referred to a possible American-Soviet combination to contain China.[8]

Ironically, communist theories about antagonistic contradictions arising from uneven economic development, which were supposed to apply only to the capitalist world, have hit the communist world with a vengeance.[9]

The uneven development of the communist world has generated forces inimical to the Soviets, which can now no longer make their foreign policy choices in purely ideological terms. Instead they are

[7] See General N. Talensky in *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn*, May 1965.

[8] It should be noted in this connection that just as Moscow is concerned about a German-Chinese two-front threat, so it is by a US-Chinese combination. See, for example, Col. Ivanov in *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 25 February 1967.

[9] Had there been no uneven development within the communist world, there might have been no Chinese accusations against the Soviet Union to the effect that it was more interested in helping non-communist states such as India and the UAR at the expense of its more needy communist allies such as China. Khrushchev tried to remedy this ideological defect in 1959 when he proclaimed that within a few years the Sino-Soviet bloc would enter communism together, implying that Soviet aid would bring all the communist states up to the same standard so that they could start building Communism from the same economic level. But Soviet national interests have foreclosed this possibility, for they require the Soviet Union to maintain its superiority over an erstwhile communist ally as China, lest the latter use any Soviet aid to enhance its capabilities to advance its own interests against the Soviets on such matters as territorial claims.

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forced to choose on the traditional basis of national interests and security: in order to advance or protect their own interests, they favour one or another state regardless of its ideological colour. One can even question whether Moscow would really like to see a united Germany under the control of a communist party that could pose in the West the challenge both to Soviet leadership in the communist world and to Soviet national security that China now poses in the East.

Conclusion

Technology, which has barred the Soviet use of force, and nationalism, which has destroyed Soviet domination of the communist world, have forced the Soviet Union to behave increasingly like a traditional great power. Its long-range prospects for regaining its revolutionary fervour are dim, since technology and nationalism are unlikely to abate. In the interim, the Soviet Union, which even now—contrary to its own desire—is considered more Russian than revolutionary, will, by acting as a status quo state, lose whatever appeal it still has as a revolutionary force.

This is the spectre haunting the Soviet leadership on their regime's fiftieth anniversary. They must recognise how fallible Marxism has proved to be, how vulnerable the party is as the interpreter of that revolutionary doctrine, and how profoundly traditional great-power tendencies have affected the Soviet Union in such a relatively short time span. The impact is even heavier when measured against the earlier Soviet optimism that it was riding the wave of history.

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VIEWS AND REVIEWS
FEBRUARY 1917

Abraham Ascher

OF THE MANY PUBLICATIONS on the revolutions of 1917 that are scheduled to appear during this anniversary year, few are likely to be more ambitious than the study by George Katkov, Fellow of St Antony's College, Oxford.* Nor is it likely that any will provoke more controversy. Mr Katkov has devoted an entire volume to the background and early development of the first, so-called bourgeois, revolution of February 1917. There are many accounts of that event, but none, at least in English, could be classified as exhaustive, much less as definitive. The outstanding works by Chernov, Sukhanov, and Trotsky, all of whom were participants in the Russian revolutionary movement, are, quite obviously, one-sided. E. H. Carr eschews narrative history and, in any case, his massive work is concerned primarily with the period after the Bolshevik seizure of power. William Henry Chamberlin's history is still very valuable, but it is outdated, having been written over thirty years ago. So many memoirs, documents, and specialised studies have been published in the intervening period that a new book on the upheaval, offering fresh insights and correctives of the many legends that have gained currency, seems entirely appropriate.

The title of the book would lead one to expect a full history of the February revolution, but in the Preface Mr Katkov indicates that it was not really his intention to produce a study of that scope. He attempted, rather, to 'undertake a close scrutiny of hitherto unconsidered aspects of the Russian revolution, in the hope of throwing a little light on some dark corners, and with the avowed aim of showing how wary we should be of the many well-established and plausibly documented myths which unfortunately pass for "objective" writing of history'. This is certainly a legitimate enterprise, but a fatal flaw of the book is that the author actually believes he has done much more. He thinks that the 'hitherto unconsidered aspects' that he investigated represent *the key* to an understanding of the February revolution. In reality, however, while he may have exposed some myths, he has written an account which at best can be considered a very partial, one-sided, and largely unpersuasive history of the causes of the revolution.

It should be noted at the outset that Mr Katkov has no sympathy at all for anyone in Russia who during the first world war agitated for political reform, even of the most moderate kind. He is persuaded that *any* change 'might easily have started a landslide of internal political developments which would have made the effective prosecution of the war as difficult as did the actual revolution of 1917'. This statement is surprising, not only because it is highly debatable, but also because it contradicts Mr Katkov's own dictum, which appears later in the book, that 'Here, as elsewhere, we are in no position to write a history of "what might have been"'. In any case, it is his view that

* George Katkov, *Russia 1917: The February Revolution* (London, 1967).

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even the slightest opposition to the regime tended to impair the war effort that seems to have coloured most of his judgments about the internal upheaval. Thus, in writing about the voluntary organisations that were established by the liberals to help assure adequate supplies to the military forces, he dwells not on the obvious fact that it was the incompetence of the government that inspired the formation of the associations, but on their having engaged in propaganda against the prevailing political order. Indeed, towards the end of the book Mr Katkov makes the rather startling assertion that the 'shortcomings of the Tsarist administration . . . were comparable to the muddles and abuses of wartime administration in other belligerent countries'. Moreover, he contends that these shortcomings 'may be discounted as a revolutionising factor, since the liberals' main line of attack on the regime was not to expose its traditional and its newly acquired vices and weaknesses, but to declare it incapable of coping with wartime problems so long as it remained autocratic'.

Mr Katkov refuses to acknowledge that the Russian liberals were motivated by patriotism, as is amply demonstrated by the ardour with which they pressed for continuing the war throughout 1917, and that their agitation against the autocracy in 1915 and 1916 was inspired by the deepest sense of despair about the fate of Russia. To him, the liberals were unable to rise above their lust for power and feared more than anything a victory for Russia that would consolidate the autocracy for decades to come. Their 'fear of defeat and [the] humiliation of Russia', he writes, 'was if we are not mistaken, only the ostensible and avowable expression of an unavowable, deep-seated fear that the war might end in victory before the political aspirations of the opposition had been fulfilled, and that the exceptional opportunities offered for their fulfilment by war conditions would be lost'.

To substantiate his thesis about the liberals Mr Katkov presents a wealth of material hitherto not generally known. For one thing, he shows, convincingly to me, that their charge of the existence of a pro-German clique at court advocating a separate peace with the enemy was without much foundation. Through careful examination of various archives and numerous other sources, he also managed to uncover a series of intrigues, conspiracies, and slander campaigns against the autocracy, several of them involving—directly or indirectly—such eminent citizens as A. I. Guchkov, A. I. Konovalov, and the Chief of Staff, General M. V. Alexeyev. He has, moreover, found some evidence to suggest that M. I. Tereshchenko, A. F. Kerensky, Konovalov, and N. V. Nekrasov, all members of the Provisional Government, belonged to a society of freemasons and were thus linked by some kind of mystic bond that had important political implications. All this is interesting and sheds new light on pre-revolutionary Russia, but in dwelling on these matters in isolation from the social and political malaise that plagued the country, Mr Katkov attaches altogether too much significance to them.

IN FACT, A STRIKING SHORTCOMING of the book is its failure to take into account what every other writer on the revolution has stressed: the incredible fumbling of the government in its attempts to cope with the

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problems engendered by an unprecedented military crisis. Not only does the author say very little about the pernicious influence Rasputin exercised over the Tsarina and Tsar and through them on state policies; he actually charges that 'wild rumours' were spread about Rasputin's influence and that the 'accusations levelled against Rasputin were invariably embellished'. Perhaps they were, but from Mr Katkov's account one would have to assume that the 'mad monk's' role in shaking public confidence in the government was negligible. He also fails to deal *in extenso* with the unpreparedness of a large part of the huge army of fifteen million men, for many of whom there were neither training facilities nor weapons. We read almost nothing about incompetent generals, inefficient ministers, or demoralised troops. The picture is one of a patriotic, able, self-sacrificing, and even 'saintly' ruler surrounded by like-minded ministers, all of them scurrilously slandered by ambitious, self-seeking politicians. Mr Katkov's animus against opponents of the old regime is so pronounced that he cannot refrain from discrediting them whenever possible. On two occasions, when he himself is not sure of the relevance of his charges, he relegates them to footnotes.

But neither the liberals nor the other critics of Tsarist rule are the major villains; Mr Katkov assigns that role to the Germans. In so doing, he turns the tables on those historians and politicians who have spread the myth about the existence of a pro-German clique at the Russian court undermining confidence in the government. He also considers German influence in Russia to have been decisive, but he insists that the agents of the enemy were members of the labour movement and revolutionaries.

It is now well known, largely as a result of work previously published by Mr Katkov himself, that shortly after the outbreak of war a Russian Marxist, A. Helphand (also known as Parvus), established contact with the German Foreign Office in order to promote the so-called *Revolutionierungspolitik*. Parvus's aim was to gain German support for Russian socialists dedicated to taking Russia out of the war. German Foreign Office documents show conclusively that Parvus was given substantial sums of money, which he apparently passed on to Russian socialists. There seems little doubt, also, that Parvus had a hand in arranging Lenin's journey through Germany into Russia in 1917 and that he gave money to the Bolsheviks, though it is not clear whether Lenin knew of these transactions. The charge was made, however, that Lenin was a 'German agent', which became a *cause célèbre* in 1917. For the historian this charge, though interesting, is hardly of great significance. It is inconceivable that Lenin, even if he was aware that his party had received German money, tailored his policies to suit the interests of the German Government. And as proof of Lenin's unscrupulousness in financial matters the evidence turned up in the German Foreign Office is superfluous: this aspect of his character is amply demonstrated by his behaviour on several other occasions.

What is so arresting in Mr Katkov's present study is the assertion that German money was a decisive factor in causing the wave of strikes in Russia in 1916 and, more important, the labour unrest in February 1917, which evolved into the revolutionary upheaval. The significance

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of the charge is immediately apparent. If true, it would force an abandonment of the interpretation of the February revolution that practically every eye-witness and scholar during the past fifty years has expounded: that the initial disorders were an unplanned, unorganised, elemental outburst. It is precisely this notion of a *spontaneous* strike movement that Mr Katkov is determined to disprove.

His argument is tortuous. He begins by tracing Parvus's negotiations with the German Foreign Office and contacts with various European socialists in 1915. He makes much of Parvus's promise to the Germans that he would be able to provoke, through an unnamed agent, a general strike in Russia on 9 January 1916, the anniversary of 'Bloody Sunday' of 1905. The Germans gave the Russian socialist one million rubles, which he indicated he had transferred to his secret agent in Petrograd. That is all the documents reveal. There are no documents indicating precisely what was done with the money. Mr Katkov does not present an iota of evidence to demonstrate that the money reached workers in Russia and caused them to go out on strike. But on 9 January 1916—a natural date for the occurrence of such an event—a strike did break out in Petrograd and labour unrest continued for several weeks there and in Nikolaev. The only support for his thesis of foreign instigation that Mr Katkov could find was a general statement by the Russian Minister for the Navy, Grigorovich, that the Germans were fomenting industrial unrest. Mr Katkov interprets the failure of this assertion to cause a sensation in the Council of Ministers as a sign that the entire government was already well aware of the activities of the Germans in Russia. (One could also explain the response of the other ministers as a sign of disbelief.) On the basis of these facts Mr Katkov feels justified in concluding that the Germans had succeeded in 'organising, through clandestine agencies, large-scale strikes, at first economic, and later, in accordance with Helphand's plan, political'.

His substantiation of the assertion that the far more massive strikes in February 1917 were caused by the Germans is even more shaky. He has no evidence that Parvus received large sums of money from the Germans in 1916. In fact, he admits that 'we lack evidence of direct instigation of labour unrest in Russia by the German agencies' for most of 1916 and early 1917. Nevertheless, he expresses 'unreserved support' for the notion that the strikes were the result of foreign intervention. 'It would' he writes, 'be foolish to ignore the existence of such agencies as a factor contributing to the revolution of 1917, which took precisely the form predicted by Helphand as early as the spring of 1915. It seems reasonable either to suggest that the successful rising of February 1917 was organised by the same agents as instigated the abortive "trial run" the previous February or to assume that it was a direct sequel to the movement begun in 1916.' Mr Katkov says that he is forced to this conclusion because no other interpretation of the causes of the events can be upheld. 'The theory of "spontaneity" only serves to cover up our ignorance.' Had the Russian workers in Petrograd really been as dissaffected as is claimed, unrest would have been unleashed in other parts of the country 'where there was exactly the same inequality in the distribution of burdens'. Moreover, Mr Katkov insists that if the workers had been predisposed to engage in 'purposeful and coordinated

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action', they would have resorted to the same kind of behaviour 'in the months subsequent to the revolution'.

IF THE THEORY OF SPONTANEITY covers up our ignorance, then Mr Katkov's theory covers up his lack of familiarity with the history of the Russian labour movement. This is confirmed by his contention that 'The unhappy story of industrial relations in the Putilov Works [where the 1916 strikes began] dates back to the first days of the war. The workers, rightly or wrongly, were convinced that the management was in the hands of Germans and Jews, who were actually sabotaging, or preparing to sabotage, the war effort. The management did not improve relations by its tactless handling of the conscription exemption orders'. The truth of the matter is that already during the turbulent year of 1905 the workers at the Putilov plant had been the first to go out on strike, setting in motion a whole series of labour disorders. More important, in July 1914, before the outbreak of the war, workers in the same plant had been the first to hold a meeting in sympathy with a massive and explosive strike in the Baku oil-fields. Police suppression of the meeting intensified the mood of militancy and within a few days the capital witnessed a bloody strike involving more than 110,000 workers. There were frequent clashes with the police and a whole cavalry brigade had to be brought into the city to restore order. In the meantime, sympathy strikes and demonstrations were staged in seven other industrial centres in the Empire. Finally, although for the first few months of the war Russia enjoyed a period of industrial peace, in the spring of 1915 the workers resumed the struggle against their employers. In that year there were one thousand strikes involving 553,000 workers. Mr Katkov barely mentions these early wartime events, no doubt because even he cannot claim that they were the result of Helphand's machinations. As a matter of fact, no one has ever suggested that foreign intervention, financial or other, was responsible for any of these strikes and disorders.

My point, quite obviously, is that if Russian workers felt sufficiently aggrieved before the war to engage in strikes, demonstrations, and violence, there is all the more reason to believe that they would do so in 1916 and 1917. By that time their economic deprivations had grown even more unbearable because in addition to them they had to suffer the hardships caused by what an increasing number had come to regard as a senseless war. It seems to me that Mr Katkov's failure to discuss in depth the workers' grievances, to take them seriously, and to consider them a major cause of the revolutionary upheaval makes it impossible for him to appreciate the dimensions of Russia's social and political crisis in 1917.

Indeed, he demonstrates very early in his work that he has no grasp of the mood of the Russian workers on the eve of the war. In his Introduction he asserts that the Bolsheviks had 'lost much of their following among the workers to the "liquidators" [right-wing Mensheviks and similar groups] and were discredited in the eyes of other revolutionaries by their connection with bank robberies'. But two years ago Leopold Haimson showed conclusively, in a penetrating article in the *Slavic Review*, that in Moscow and St Petersburg at least, this was

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not at all true. On the contrary, from 1912 until 1914 the Mensheviks were increasingly losing ground to the Bolsheviks, whose tactics, much more than those of their rivals in the Marxist camp, reflected the growing militancy of the workers in the two capitals. The wave of patriotism engendered by the outbreak of hostilities put a temporary damper on that militancy but nothing happened from mid-1914 until early 1916 to alleviate the grievances that had given rise to the mood of despair among the workers.

Mr Katkov's insistence on the decisive importance of German money in explaining the February revolution is particularly regrettable because his volume contains many moving, vivid, and valuable sections. His long description of the events leading up to Tsar Nicholas's abdication is certainly the most detailed and informative in English. His analysis of the Tsar's motives in stepping down, if somewhat too idyllic, provides interesting insights into the personality of Russia's last Emperor. Mr Katkov has a knack for relating little-known but fascinating incidents, such as the Bolshevik Bonch-Bruevich's testimony that Rasputin was not a sectarian, which had the effect of protecting the privileged position of the monk. He also has a good eye for details which sometimes can illuminate a complicated historical event. Nothing more dramatically demonstrates the pathos of the Tsarist government's attempt to deal with the disorders in February 1917 than its proclamation of a state of siege, which, however, could not be publicised because at military headquarters there was no glue available with which to post the notices. As a consequence, they were scattered in the streets, 'where they were blown hither and thither in the blizzard and trampled in the snow by the dispersing crowds'.

Occasionally, to be sure, Mr Katkov makes a surprising error, the most notable of which is his statement that the paper *Nashe Slovo*, edited by Trotsky during the war, was published by social-democrats who 'followed the veteran Russian Marxist Plekhanov in his defencist and pro-Entente attitude'. But the chief weakness of the volume derives from Mr Katkov's perspective. His failure to see the revolution of 1917 as the consequence of deeply rooted social and political tensions in Tsarist Russia invests the entire study with an air of unreality. His attempt to expose some of the myths surrounding the revolution is certainly laudable, but in the process he may have created a new myth no less far-fetched than the old ones.

IN EASTERN EUROPE

George A. Schopflin

HOW MUCH IS NEW in eastern Europe? J. F. Brown's analysis of events in that area during the ten years from 1956 inevitably has destalinisation as its implicit and explicit theme.[1] He examines in detail the changes which took place under Khrushchev on a country-by-country and sector-by-sector basis, and his underlying conclusion is that a great deal *is*

[1] J. F. Brown, *The New Eastern Europe: The Khrushchev Era and After* (London, 1966), vii & 306 pp.

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new in eastern Europe. In essence, the reasoning is that under Khrushchev, as much in spite of as because of him, the countries of eastern Europe sloughed off the Stalinist straitjacket and reassumed many of the national traits which they had had before communism. Parallel and directly related to this process was the evolution in the relationship between the east Europeans and the Soviet Union and the transformation of the status of the former from vassalage to something more like an alliance.

The best and most valuable parts of the book are those dealing with the internal political and economic developments in each country. These sections are contemporary history of the highest standard. Mr Brown has mastered a wide range of information and has successfully arranged it to give a clear and coherent picture of the developments in each country. The section on cultural affairs is possibly less convincing Here one has the feeling that Mr. Brown has been unable to get inside his theme, with the result that its treatment seems a little flat. Two possible reasons for this suggest themselves: one is the extremely disparate nature of the subject-matter—cultural affairs are notoriously difficult to handle—and the other is that because in eastern Europe culture is so closely tied up with the emotions of each particular country's political life, it becomes virtually impossible for an outsider to offer an adequate assessment of the role of culture. Inevitably, therefore, this section is at best an observer's picture.

A survey of eastern Europe such as this one must unavoidably omit much more than it includes. Two omissions, however, seem regrettable. One of these is that there has been no attempt to consider social problems, or to do so only in passing, when treating economics and agriculture. So, for example, the impact of industrialisation and of the creation of such complexes as Nowa Huta and Dunaújváros are among the fundamental problems which the various east European countries are facing today; equally important are the low birth-rate in Bohemia-Moravia and Hungary and the high birth-rate in Poland; or the housing problem throughout eastern Europe; or continuing rural poverty. Until a few years ago the east Europeans themselves tended to dismiss these and similar questions as trivial, mere relics of capitalism which would be liquidated with the march of progress. Today they are no longer so sure. At least since 1962 increasing attention has been paid to social questions and there is widespread anxiety about some of them. The other omission is that of Yugoslavia. This is a pity, but is probably justifiable on the ground that a really thorough examination of the Yugoslav experience would have required more space than in the case of the other east European communist countries.

What is particularly welcome about this book is that it makes no attempt to establish various vague theoretical categories, such as, say, 'pluralism', and then to squeeze the events dealt with into their unwieldy and unhelpful framework. Such exercises lose their value rather rapidly with the changing fashions in theorising. Finally, the clarity of Mr. Brown's style makes his book a rare landmark among the only too frequent turgidities that pass for the writing of English nowadays.

Where Mr Brown might be said to provide the flesh of east European

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affairs, Professor Skilling has reconstructed the skeleton.[2] *The Governments of Communist East Europe* deals with just that: with the institutions of government, how decisions are taken, and how they are implemented. The nature of the various government organs and institutions is relatively straightforward. A much more complex problem is presented by the process of taking decisions, by who is involved, which particular bodies are consulted and by whom the information received is evaluated. Professor Skilling enters his own *caveat* here: 'the process of communist decision-making is veiled, then, in uncertainty and difficult to define' (p. 123). This is the core of the problem. However carefully the institutions are defined and delineated, in the final analysis there is no guarantee in a communist system that they will actually be used. Professor Skilling does, however, point to an underlying trend. The communist governments have shown themselves increasingly anxious to involve the mass of the people in the political life of the country. This has resulted, in some countries at least, in the upgrading of legislatures and the infusion of life into other institutions such as trade unions and agricultural organisations. Professor Skilling's picture of the communist Press is perhaps a little one-sided: there are a number of publications which have genuinely represented interests other than those of the government and may have run foul of it. Such, for instance, was the fate of *Jelenkor*, which had its editorial board removed by the Hungarian Government as a result.

In his conclusion Professor Skilling picks out a number of tendencies which could lead to more constitutional forms of government, though he is not optimistic. Although the most spectacular of these 'is the differentiation taking place among the communist states' (p. 228) and the growth of nationalism, just as important in the long term is the greater awareness of legality, or, rather, the partial decline in arbitrary action. Concurrent with this there is 'a mounting rationality in decision-making and a corresponding decline in ideology' (p. 230). At this stage Professor Skilling might also have said something about the re-emergence of personal responsibility, a greater willingness to accept the consequences of one's actions. But these developments are unlikely to lead to democracy as understood in the West. At best, he thinks, a less totalitarian and authoritarian system will evolve, which might be more rational and more sensitive to public opinion.

Professor Skilling has written a useful, if not particularly exciting, book, which will serve as a work of reference for some time.

[2] H. Gordon Skilling, *The Governments of Communist East Europe* (New York, 1966) xv & 256 pp.

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Correction

The final paragraph was unfortunately omitted from the article by Professor Marshal I. Goldman in the last issue of *Survey* (p. 142). It runs as follows:

While stranger things have happened, the legalisation of private enterprise in the USSR appears to be only a remote possibility. For that matter there may even be some retrenchment and a return to strict centralised control. Most likely, however, the next fifty years will bring state-controlled decentralisation as the Soviets try to see if they can cope with affluence with any more success than their counterparts have done in the West.

Addendum

The source of the report, reproduced in *Survey*, no. 63, p. 159, on the discussion of the draft third volume of the *History of the CPSU* is the clandestine publication *Phoenix* circulating in the Soviet Union and edited by Y. Galanskov.

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Waldemar Besson
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DIE AUSSENPOLITIK
erscheint monatlich.
Einzelpreis 4,50 DM
Jahresabonnement 42,– DM.
Für Studenten jährlich 33,60 DM.
Auslieferung:
Kommissionshaus Buch und Ton
4830 Gütersloh, Postfach 709
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